

Yes, we have no mention of the 'b' word by the minister

I have summoned the US Ambassador, Stephen Byers, to see him, and Britain, with our European partners, is at daggers drawn with the United States, about... well, you know what.

Banana is not a word that falls easily from the lips of such a dignified man. Carrying with him the air of a well-regarded local government accountant, Mr Byers displays the sort of pursed-lipped gravity to which any mention of bananas would be a kind of affront. But Byers is the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, and Britain, with our European partners, is at daggers drawn with the United States, about... well, you know what.

Yesterday Mr Byers had to make a Commons statement. The Americans are banning our kitware because Europe won't take their... you know what. Trade war looms. There was no way round mentioning the cause of it.

Quite possibly Mr Byers had never said "banana" in

his life. Banana splits are not the kind of pudding this quiet, neat, trim-suited man would order. If he had a pudding at all, it would be a small lemon sorbet. Simply to say the "b" word would get his specs steamed up.

But he said it. Once. Opting to get it over with fast, Byers had placed the word in the first sentence of his four-page statement. To remove any hint of gaiety that the word might have lent the passage, he couched the banana with

two acronyms and the word "regime": "... dispute with the WTO over the EU's banana regime...". And he had chosen a grey tie for the occasion — a different one from last Thursday. Byers keeps a whole rack of ties, all grey.

He never said "banana" again in the singular. This

was quite a feat of draughtsmanship. We had "an amended regime", "this regime", "the US action" and "this decision". But on the penultimate page of his statement Byers locked himself into an argument that could be expressed in no other way. "It is particularly unfortunate," he said.

There was no way of getting round the fruit. He hit the bullet. "Bananas" he said. Not since John Selwyn Gummer had to say "porpoises" nine times during a single statement has pride been so punctured. Next week Mr Byers's civil servants plan to make him say "bottoms". The context is still being contrived.

Words matter. One word

yesterday, wrongly reported, is in danger of entering books of political quotations in its mistaken form. Mocking what he saw as the anti-European zealotry of the present Official Opposition, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, called the Tories "the rump of a sect of a faction of a once-national party". A good line. I heard it, and have no doubt that those journalistic colleagues who reported "the rump of a sect..." etc. misheard. But that was the version going the rounds as reporters filed their copy. In fact it works as well as the original.

Even better would be to add the misheard to the heard: "the rump of the rump of a sect of a faction..." etc. So shall we just settle on that?

The Times's "When Did You Stop Beating Your Wife?" parliamentary award to Tory spokesman Nick Gibb. He asked the Chief Secretary which Labour most regretted: making a false promise; breaking it; or being found out?

Water firms fear pollution by GM crops

WATER companies are demanding a moratorium on the commercial planting of genetically modified crops amid fears that chemicals used on them may pollute rivers, lakes and reservoirs.

The water industry fears that widespread planting of herbicide-tolerant crops, such as oil seed rape and sugar beet, might lead to problems in meeting the strict legal limits on the levels of individual weed and pest-killing chemicals in drinking water. The companies are concerned that they may face multimillion-pound bills to put in herbicide removal technologies at water treatment works.

A spokesman for Water UK, the industry's body, said: "We have genuine concerns about the widespread use of crops which rely on just two chemicals, so we favour a go-slow, a moratorium. We need time to find the answers. We need several years." An industry team of environmental and scientific experts is to meet for the first time this month, to investigate the possible effect on drinking water. English Nature, the Government's wildlife adviser, has called for a three to five-year moratorium.

At present farmers use a wide range of different herbicides to control weeds. Peter Beaumont, of the Pesticides

Nick Nuttall
on concern
that narrower
range of farm
chemicals may
breach EU laws

Trust in London, estimates that between 60 and 70 are used in British agriculture. But genetically engineered crops such as oil seed rape, maize and sugar beet, which are being readied for commercial planting, work in conjunction with just two. These are glyphosate, marketed by Monsanto under the brand name Round Up, and glufosinate, marketed under the trade name of Liberty by Agri-Evo.

The European Drinking Water Directive sets the limit for individual pesticides or herbicides in drinking water of 0.1 microgrammes per litre, or less than one part per billion. Total pesticide and herbicide levels must not be above 0.5 microgrammes per litre.

The latest report by the Government's Drinking Water Inspectorate says that in 1997, three million tests were carried out on tap water and that

99.7 per cent met the standards even in the big agricultural heartlands of East Anglia and Lincolnshire.

Water companies have invested £1 billion in treatment and at least one company, Wessex Water, paid farmers to switch to organic agriculture to reduce chemical sprays. The sheer range of herbicides available has also helped to keep individual chemicals within the European limits.

Water companies are worried that widespread planting of gene-altered crops and their reliance on two weedkillers could lead to an increase in breaches. Pamela Taylor, chief executive of Water UK, said there were other concerns including the impact of wastes from animals eating the gene-altered crops. The industry is disappointed that it has not won the right to be told where such crops are being planted so it can monitor their impact.

John Fowell, chief toxicologist at the Water Research Centre in Hertford-on-Thames, believes that gene-altered crops could be a boon to the environment. Seed companies say that farmers will need to use less sprays. He added: "This needs to be strictly monitored. If there is concern, it centres on breakdown products of these herbicides building up in ground water."



Elizabeth II: the Queen at costumers Angels and Bermans in London yesterday

Continued from page 1
Plenty, "it's quite terrifying, it's such an extraordinary play," said the former Elizabeth I.

Elizabeth II ran into her ancestor again at the theatrical costumers Angels and Bermans, where there was a reminder of her own theatrical past, a 1944 photograph of herself and her sister performing in *Old Mother Red Riding Boots*, one of a series of Christmas pantomimes they mounted at Wapping during the war.

It was time for the interval.

consisting of lunch at the Ivy. The lucky luvvies who got to sit next to the Queen over a lunch of plum tomato and basil galette, salmon fishcakes and Scandinavian iced berries were Dr Jonathan Miller and Michael Codron, producer of Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen*.

The final act of the afternoon starred Lord Attenbor-

ough and was played at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, of which Dickie is chairman. He showed the Queen fencing classes, an expression class for visiting Japanese actors, and students rehearsing a death scene from the Jacobean tragedy *The Changeling*.

"I started this morning with young people at the Young Vic, and they were dying like flies," the Queen said brightly, telling the drama coach that it was cruel to ask the dying heroine to breathe more deeply when she was wearing such a tight corset.

No job for 400 doctors trained at £40m

BY IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of urgently needed specialist doctors, who cost the National Health Service millions of pounds to train, face dismissal because there is no money to provide them with jobs.

The first notices have been sent out terminating the doctors' contracts: they take effect from the end of this month. By May 2001 about 400 doctors, trained at a cost of £40 million, will have to quit medicine, go abroad or start another five-year course in another speciality with no certainty of a job at the end of it.

The doctors are obstetricians and gynaecologists but the British Medical Association said yesterday that because of "shambolic workforce planning" they would be only the first specialists to be hit in this way. Before long, ear, nose and throat specialists, as well as cardio-thoracic and renal surgeons would face a similar problem. At the same time there would be unfilled vacancies for radiologists and psychiatrists.

"This is a human tragedy for trained, experienced doctors who are being put on the scrapheap in their thirties, and for the women and children who are dying because of lack of care," Ian Bogie, chairman of the BMA, said. "We have been warning the Government for years that this was going to happen and this is just the first crisis."

"It will happen in other specialisms too. The frightening thing is the Government thinks it has a good workforce plan when in fact it is shambolic. These doctors have been betrayed and deceived. They have spent years in medical school, done all the terrible hours of junior doctors, completed more training to become a specialist and are now being told they are redundant."

Nizam Mamode, deputy chairman of the junior doctors' committee, said the Government was wasting a perfect opportunity to improve maternity care. "It is a scandal that these people are being jettisoned while women don't get the care they deserve," he said.

"The scandal does not stop there. There is to be a reduction of 293 being accepted for training but the Health Department have refused to spend the £5.4 million that this will save on hiring the consultants who have already been trained. The whole thing seems crazy."

About 500 doctors were recruited to train as obstetricians and gynaecologists over the past five years because the NHS estimated in the early 1990s that there was a need for 7 per cent more consultant posts in the specialty. However the ongoing cash squeeze in the NHS means that only 2 per cent more posts have been created and last year there were 28 vacancies in the field.

Census to ask if couples are gay

Questions on personal relationships that will determine for the first time how many people are living as homosexual couples are to be included in the 2001 census.

It will also ask people their religion for the first time since 1851 and contain new questions on race, including one asking those who class themselves as white to say whether they are Irish.

Couples will be asked to indicate either if they are married, unrelated or "partners". The data will be analysed to find out how many couples of the same sex describe themselves as partners. The question was welcomed by gay rights campaigners, who argued that it would give the first official recognition to homosexual "marriages".

E. coli outbreak

An 18-month-old girl is one of three children seriously ill with possible kidney failure after an outbreak of *E. coli* food poisoning in Cumbria. Twenty-five people have been affected and 11 are still in hospital. Health officials are checking a possible link with milk from a farm at Brigham near Cockermouth.

Smaller classes

Ministers expect to more than halve the number of young children in large classes after allocating another £150 million to provide new classrooms and employ more teachers in primary schools. It is forecast that fewer than 200,000 children aged five to seven will be in classes of more than 30 by September.

Porpoise dies

A pregnant porpoise that was rescued by divers from the Thames at Westminster died minutes later. Paul Jepson of London Zoo, who was carrying out a post-mortem examination, said there was no obvious cause of death. He said the 4ft harbour porpoise might have been distressed after being stranded at a low tide.

Vet rents scanner

A hospital in West Sussex is to raise money by renting a scanner used to detect brain and spine tumours to a vet. Officials at Worthing Hospital said that there was no health risk and that patients would retain priority over pets. The vet, Ralph Abercromby, is to use the £600,000 machine two or three evenings a week.

CORRECTION

Our map showing local government elections in May 1999 omitted the 36 Metropolitan Boroughs such as Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield and Birmingham, where one third of the seats are up for election this year. Also left out were the district councils in which all the council seats are being contested in May.

Solicitors hit back after 'seamy' slur

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

SOLICITORS' leaders angrily denounced the Government last night after a minister told them to get their house in order and crack down on the "seamy" side of the profession.

The Law Society told a Home Office minister to "put up or shut up" in a clash over allegedly poor and incompetent advice offered to asylum seekers and immigrants. Michael Mathews, the President of the Law Society, signalled that the profession had finally lost patience with the Government following the latest criticism from the immigration minister.

Mike O'Brien, the minister who is also a solicitor, said there were real concerns about the activities of some solicitors. He said: "There is a clear message to the legal profession. There is a seamy side to my profession and I want that seamy side cleaned up."

He added: "The Law Society have been asked to sort it out and we expect them to do so. We don't want to have these advisers and lawyers providing

incompetent and sometimes corrupt advice."

"We expect the Law Society and the Bar, in some respects, to ensure that the law is cleaned up."

Mr O'Brien, who was speaking at a conference in London organised by the Immigration Advisory Service, gave warning that if the Law Society did not rid the profession of poor immigration lawyers the Government would require solicitors to register under a new system of regulation.

The Government is to set up statutory regulation of non-legally qualified immigration advisers but has exempted solicitors because the Law Society has agreed to introduce improved training for firms offering legal advice on immigration and asylum issues.

The Law Society said it had repeatedly requested information from the Home Office about firms involved in providing incompetence advice. It said without detailed allegations it was powerless to act against firms.

Aitken 'recovering from stroke'

Case is dropped against ex-business partner, writes Michael Horsnell

JONATHAN AITKEN, the former Conservative Cabinet minister who is awaiting sentence for perjury and perverting the course of justice, was said yesterday to be recovering from a minor stroke.

The stroke apparently happened last week and involved burst blood vessels that affected his sight. His lawyers said he was expected to make a full recovery, but his mother at first said she knew nothing about it. However, Lady Aitken said later: "I gather he has had what they call a mini-stroke... not an incapacitating sort. He is perfectly all right."

Said Ayas, Aitken's friend and former business partner, yesterday walked free from the Old Bailey after charges against him of attempting to pervert the course of justice were dropped. The former MP had pleaded not guilty to the latter charge, which had been jointly laid against the two men.

After the hearing, Mr Ayas said: "I am

very relieved. It has been a very stressful time when you are in a case like this." The withdrawal of the two charges against Mr Ayas — together with the fact that Aitken, 56, has already admitted other charges — mean that details of their relationship, which might have embarrassed the Saudi Arabian royal family and the British Government, will never be heard in open court.

Aitken, who was Defence Procurement Minister and then Chief Secretary to the Treasury under John Major, made a 120-paragraph confession to police admitting he had woven a web of deceit during his unsuccessful libel action in 1997 against *The Guardian* and *Granada Tele-*

vision for which he still has to pay £2 million in costs. His civil action centred on the allegation that he had stayed at the Ritz in Paris in 1993 at the expense of prominent Saudi friends — in breach of rules covering government ministers. It was his lying at the High Court about the trip that led to criminal charges.

Aitken subsequently confessed that he alone was responsible for forcing his wife Lolicia, his teenage daughter Victoria and Mr Ayas to tell lies in witness statements.

In his confession, Aitken detailed how the Saudis paid a second hotel bill for him as a minister the day after the infamous jaunt in Paris. *The Times* understands.

The Lebanese-born Mr Ayas, 56, formally pleaded not guilty yesterday to the two charges against him, and Mr Justice Potts directed that not guilty verdicts be recorded.

Details of Aitken's confession were disclosed at a criminal hearing in December which could not then be reported.

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Lakeside: the business end of the affair

BY CAROL MIDDLETON
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

WHEN Monica Lewinsky began her affair with the US President it is unlikely that she saw it ending with a trip to the Lakeside shopping centre in Essex.

The shopping and fast-food emporium, which starred in a recent BBC docu-soap is, however, where she can be seen at 11.30am on Saturday week, signing copies of Andrew Morton's book and fulfilling that obligatory requirement of the modern book deal — the publicity blitz.

Miss Lewinsky will travel to 19 bookstores around the country in 18 days. The woman who almost brought down the President flies to London from New York on Sunday. On Monday she will sign at Harrods before heading for venues including the Trafford Centre in Manchester; Meadowhall in Sheffield; Merryhill, Birmingham; and the new Bluewater complex in Kent.

Security will be almost as tight as for a president. A firm of private security guards has spent weeks studying the layout of book shops as far afield as Glasgow and Bath and advising managers on where she should sit and where the pub-

THE TOUR

lic, clamouring for a glimpse of the world's most famous lover, should queue up.

Miss Lewinsky will have 24-hour use of a chauffeur-driven Mercedes courtesy of her publishers, Michael O'Mara Books, and will be accompanied at all times by a bodyguard, a publicist and two sales managers.

Many celebrities refuse to tour book shops outside London, but Miss Lewinsky, 25, has gamely agreed to a somewhat gruelling schedule.

By tradition she will make her debut at Harrods, where she will sit at the desk where such historic figures as Mikhail Gorbachev, Norman Schwarzkopf and Baroness Thatcher have autographed copies of their weighty tomes.

A spokesman for Harrods said: "She will not be coming in through one of the main public entrances, she will be coming in the back way and up to the Art Room where many, many famous people have signed their books."

He added that Harrods was expecting big crowds and security would be at a maximum. Within three hours of an advertisement being placed in Lon-

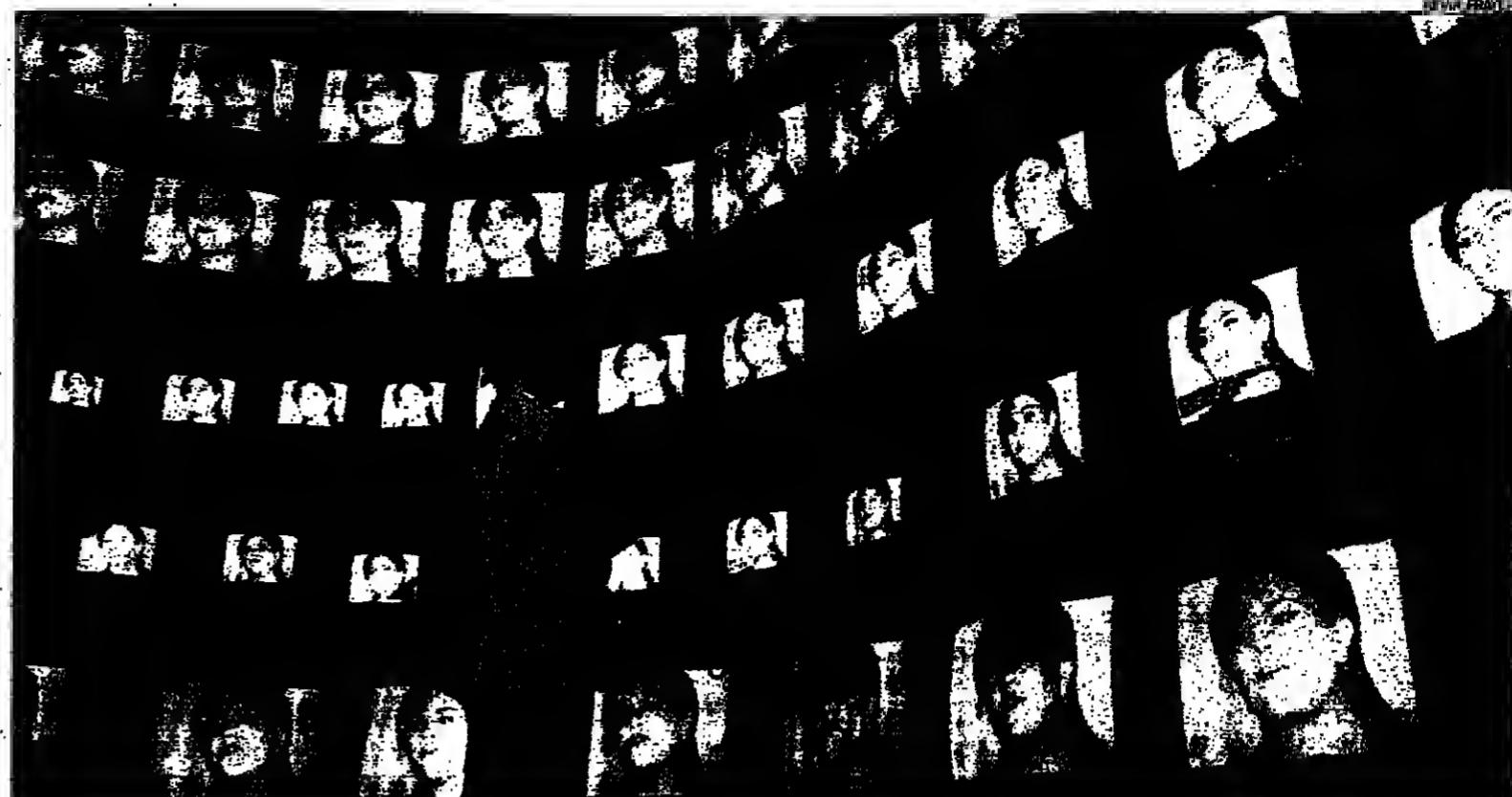
don's Evening Standard, 150 orders had been placed for reserved signed copies of *Monica's Story*.

Press photographers and cameramen will be allowed to take pictures of the former Whitehouse intern for 15 minutes before signings. However, journalists are not allowed to ask her questions.

A spokeswoman for Dillons in Newcastle, which Miss Lewinsky will visit on March 16, said: "She is bringing her own security people who we understand have been supplied by the publishers. We had a visit from them last week to look over the store. She will not be sitting at street level."

"We are really looking forward to it. Not all famous people are prepared to go outside of London to promote their books so we think there will be a real buzz to the day."

The author Andrew Morton, who is in the US promoting the book until March 13, will join her at Waterstones in Leeds on March 16. Miss Lewinsky has visited Britain once before during her work with the Pentagon. Later, in December 1997, she wrote a letter to Bill Clinton in which she said: "I loved you with all of my heart, Bill, and wanted to



A shop assistant watches Ms Lewinsky's ABC interview at a store in Toronto. A record 70 million Americans are believed to have tuned in

The show that stopped a nation

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH
IN WASHINGTON

AMERICANS, many of whom have been insisting for months that they just wanted Monica Lewinsky to go away, made her first television interview the most-watched news programme in the nation's history.

The ABC said that provisional ratings figures indicated that 70 million people had watched some or all of the interview with Barbara Walters on Wednesday night. That unexpectedly eclipsed the 62 million who saw Oprah Winfrey's interview with Michael Jackson in 1993 and

THE TELEVISION DEBUT

Lewinsky, weeping and joking by turn. At Washington's Dulles Airport, passengers stepping off planes delayed by bad weather crowded around television sets to watch Ms Lewinsky tell her tale.

"We are thrilled," an ABC spokeswoman said yesterday. The network charged about £400,000 for each 30-second advertising spot during the interview.

Ms Lewinsky, who was not paid, had said that she wanted to tell people she was not a slut. She appeared to have had some success, with 44 percent of viewers saying that they thought more favourably of her after the broadcast, according to an ABC poll.



Pentagon protects identity of President's love rival

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE OTHER MAN

THE Pentagon yesterday shielded the identity of the defence official whose child Monica Lewinsky said she aborted during her relationship with President Clinton.

Ms Lewinsky refers to him with only a first name, "Thomas". In Andrew Morton's book *Mohikka's Story* she described him as "brilliant and exciting" in her interview on American television but was reluctant to say much more about him.

She did tease Mr Clinton about there being another man, telling him that he had competition. She did not tell him about the abortion, which she had found to be "just horrible and very depressing".

Thomas, 42, a civilian policy strategist, was single at the time of his three-month affair with Ms Lewinsky but has since married. He was said to have recouped in horror when her relationship with Mr Clinton became public knowledge in January last year.

Thomas and Ms Lewinsky first met as members of a US delegation visiting Bosnia while she worked as an administrative assistant to Ken Bacon, the chief Pentagon spokesman. She was moved to the Pentagon by White House staff who thought she was seen

ing too much of the President. Soon after Bosnia she saw Thomas for a date and he invited her to stay the night at her house, according to the book. She declined because the President might call her at home, as indeed he did, and they chatted far into the night.

She ended the affair with Thomas because, ironically, he was seeing other women and by then it was clear he was never going to be the new love of her life. "I enjoyed his company and I had feelings for him but not very strong feelings," Ms Lewinsky said.

She discovered that she was pregnant just as the affair was ending in October 1996.

At the Pentagon, senior officials turned aside questions about the identity of Thomas, saying the affair was consensual and was not connected with defence policy. Colleagues have described him as an innocent bystander who did nothing improper. A Clinton aide said: "This may be the only example of someone whose life hasn't been ruined by an association with the scandal."

The Morton book, which went on sale in America yesterday, sheds new light on potential problems facing Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, over alleged strong-arm

tactics used by his staff. Under the immunity agreement in exchange for her grand jury testimony, Ms Lewinsky was barred from discussing the conduct of Mr Starr's staff on television but the deal did not apply to the book.

One chapter recounts how Michael Emmick, a Starr prosecutor, called her lawyer, William Ginsburg, and offered to fax a copy of the affidavit in which she denied having an affair with Mr Clinton. She had signed the false statement in connection with the Paula Jones case. Two FBI agents who were in the room at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel near the Pentagon pulled Mr Emmick roughly away from the telephone. They realised that Mr Ginsburg would instantly real-

ise that Starr's office had seen the affidavit before it was filed with the court and it must have come from Ms Jones's lawyers, the book says.

The US Justice Department is investigating whether Mr Starr's staff had improper contacts with Ms Jones's lawyers and attempted to make Ms Lewinsky co-operate with them without letting her have a lawyer present. Ms Lewinsky has said she was petrified by threats that she could be imprisoned for 27 years for obstruction of justice.

It was to be many months, however, before she signed the immunity deal that enabled Mr Starr to proceed. Without her help and without the infamously stained dress, he would have been unable to make the case for impeachment against the President.

Asked on television about the dress, Ms Lewinsky said: "It's fun to think it was a souvenir but that's not what it was." She explained that she did not know what the stains were at first and the reason why she never had the garment dry-cleaned was because she had grown too fat for it.

Ms Lewinsky said there was no new Prince Charming in her life but she would still like to marry and have children. She was asked how she would describe her presidential affair to them.

"Mommy made a big mistake," she replied, grinning.

'He didn't have to deny the relationship with such anger'

THE INTERVIEW

BY OUR MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MONICA LEWINSKY last night answered any lingering doubts as to whether she might still be in love with President Clinton.

In an interview with Jon Snow on Channel 4, she recalled the precise moment her feelings towards him turned sour. She said that she now switched channels if he appeared on television.

Miss Lewinsky, 25, could not hide the bitterness as she told Snow that she had come to realise that "rather than there being a man, Bill Clinton, he's 100 per cent politician". She added: "He's a good politician, but 100 per cent politician." Asked whether she hated or loved him when she saw him on television, she said: "Not love him, but sometimes I hate him."

Most of her hatred was clearly reserved for Linda Tripp, the woman who taped the conversations in which Ms Lewinsky detailed her affair. "She gutted me. She violated me. She knifed me." The former White House intern also disclosed that she would



like the famous semen-stained Gap dress returned to her so that she could burn it.

Her illusions about the President were shattered, she said, when she saw him on national television denying that he had ever had a sexual relationship with "that woman Monica Lewinsky".

"I remember exactly where I was, sitting on the bed in the apartment, watching TV, legs crossed... I felt I could see and hear in his voice and his actions how very angry he was with me. And that hurt. He could have denied this relationship in a different way. He also disclosed that she would

have been sold by Channel 4 to more than 30 countries, she admitted that she had been devoted to President Clinton and had hoped for a future with him after he left office.

The first time she had seen him it had "taken her breath away". "He has a very magnetic sense about him and he's very sensual and attractive and draws you into his energy," she said.

"He just sort of looks at you. He locks eyes with you and he sort of peels away the layers of your being with his eyes and with his energy and his spirit and it's very intense."

One of the things she had found most humiliating was the idea that their sex had been "one-sided". "This notion that... I received nothing is false... [during] the first encounter he concentrated on me and focused on me more before I focused on him."

However, she admitted: "He didn't say he was in love with me, no."

Asked what she would say if she saw him again, Miss Lewinsky said she would apologise for being "indiscreet about the relationship". But she added: "Right now I could think of a few other people that I'd rather spend an evening with than him."

Stay of execution for knitwear industry

Government pledge gives glimmer of hope to a mainstay of Borders economy, reports Shirley English

MILL towns in the Scottish Borders fear ruin because of the trade war over bananas. Twenty-two small companies that produce cashmere knitwear said that up to 1,000 jobs were at risk because of the threatened loss of business worth £20 million.

MPS and the industry began intensive campaigning to protect the mills' 2,300 staff when the 100 per cent tariff on 14 randomly chosen items was mooted by the US in December. Their efforts appeared to have failed, with the mills becoming the main victim of a dispute that has nothing to do with them.

Yesterday afternoon, however, there was a glimmer of hope when the Government protested to the US Ambassador and pledged to underwrite the cost of the tariffs for cashmere, the worst-affected British industry.

Half of all European cashmere and 90 per cent of British cashmere comes from the Borders. In towns such as Hawick nine in ten jobs are dependent on the industry. Brian Wilson, the Trade Minister, accused the US of declaring "economic warfare" on the region by targeting its main employer.

David Douglas, chief executive of Scottish Borders Enterprise, welcomed the Government's intervention yesterday. But he said: "Morale is still very low. We are all going to

be on tenterhooks for the next six weeks until the World Trade Organisation makes its ruling. There is a fear that this could get worse and we have no control over it."

The government pledge provided a lifeline for Clan Douglas, a Hawick company that exports 90 per cent of its luxury knitwear to the US. Without it the firm would have closed by August, Arthur Rennie, the factory manager, said.

"The situation is desperate. Having to pay these bonds would have meant we quite literally would have run out of cash," George Peden, chief execu-

tive of the Scottish Cashmere Association, said: "Our biggest concern was that we needed to give our customers confidence that they could place the orders with Scotland and we would deliver the goods without the 100 per cent duty. That is the lifeline the Government has given us."

The Borders economy has already been hit hard by the strong pound and the economic crisis in the Far East, which resulted in thousands of job losses in textiles and the electronics industry, the area's other main employer.

"If the mills close, there will be nothing left for Hawick," said Betty Turnbull, 55, who works for Clan Douglas and has been in the industry all her life, like her parents.

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Sir Leon Brittan denouncing the sanctions yesterday. He said that the US risked a "major trade confrontation".

America's complex links with banana republics

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

OFFICIALS for the Clinton Administration say the decision to take the banana issue to the World Trade Organisation was based on a mix of US corporate interests and the principles of free trade. But others detect a more sinister explanation.

The three biggest US fruit companies — Dole, Chiquita Brands and Del Monte — control about 60 per

cent of the world market compared with the Caribbean growers' 3 per cent. Chiquita complains that Europe's tariffs cost it more than \$60 million a year in revenues.

Expecting to expand their markets in Eastern Europe dramatically after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, American companies invested heavily in their Latin American plantations but have seen little return.

As for political influence, during

the mid-90s, when Chiquita was pressing the Clinton Administration to take its case before the WTO, Carl Lindner, Chiquita's chairman, reportedly donated more than \$1 million to the Democrat Party. In fact the Cincinnati-based tycoon has been pumping money into US campaign coffers — Democrat and Republican — for decades. Critics say the donations are what enabled Mr Lindner to win sudden access to the

Clinton Administration — including key meetings with Mikey Kantor when US Trade Representative.

America has a long history of defending the banana companies' interests in Latin America. In 1954 the CIA helped to overthrow Jacobo Arbenz, Guatemala's socialist president, in part to protect the plantations of the United Fruit Company, as Chiquita was then known. The companies' influence in Central

America earned Honduras its "banana republic" reputation. The companies notoriously vied for government favours, paying huge bribes.

In 1975 Eli Black, the chairman of United Brands, committed suicide after it was disclosed that he paid a \$1.25 million bribe to the Honduran Government. The Honduran President was subsequently toppled by a military coup. Although more democratic governments have emerged in

Examiner punched by driver taking test

By DAVID ADAMS

ALL DAY

12 hours

10 hours

8 hours

6 hours

4 hours

2 hours

1 hour

30 minutes

15 minutes

10 minutes

5 minutes

3 minutes

1 minute

30 seconds

15 seconds

10 seconds

5 seconds

3 seconds

1 second

0.5 seconds

0.25 seconds

0.125 seconds

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0.015625 seconds

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0.00390625 seconds

Two countries divided by a common fruit

BRITISH-AMERICAN relations have always been more about national interest than sentiment. Usually there has been close co-operation on defence and intelligence, yet both countries have from time to time disagreed on economic and trade matters. That was vividly illustrated yesterday in the Commons when George Robertson's assertion of Anglo-American solidarity on the Iraq no-fly zone was followed by Stephen Byers' theatrical announcement that he had "summoned" the American Ambassador over the banana dispute. Talk of "carping" and the like is gesture politics that exaggerates the current strains on Washington/London relations and gives a misleading impression of what the dispute involves.

The British and American Governments have almost always been able to balance differences over trade issues with close agreement in other areas. As the Blair and Clinton Administrations now see eye to eye on Bosnia, Iraq, Northern Ireland and Kosovo.

Nonetheless, the banana dispute matters, not least because it has developed into such a public spat. Washington and Brussels have argued for several years over American claims that Europe gives unfair access to banana imports from former colonies in the Caribbean and Africa. No jobs in Europe or America are directly affected by the banana trade, as opposed to the threatened retaliation.

The Clinton Administration and British sceptics accuse Brussels of being intransigent and flouting the spirit of the rules of the World Trade Organisation. In Washington's view, European concessions after past WTO rulings still allow for a regime that discriminates against US distributors of Latin American fruit. The EU, and Mr Byers, argue that the American retaliatory tariffs are unlawful under WTO rules, as well as inflammatory. A WTO arbitrators' panel is considering whether the EU has complied with its previous ruling.

There have been rumblings from the European side that the White House may have been too influenced by Carl Lindner, the chairman of the banana group Chiquita Brands International, who has been a sizeable political donor.

At the same time, the Clinton Administration has been under pressure from Congress, which might have wanted mandatory sanctions if action had not been taken on Wednesday. These measures are partly symbolic and intended to buy time until the arbitrators' report is ready.

Underlying this argument is the threat of more general protectionism across the Atlantic. Congress and American policymakers are worried about the rapidly rising US trade deficit and have been pressing for cuts in European interest rates to boost growth.

This has led to increasing tensions: for instance, on Wednesday, the House of Representatives passed a Bill that would ban Concorde from flying into the US if the EU proceeds with plans to ban certain older, noisier American planes.

This is all about American claims that the European Airbus has an unfair advantage.

At stake is not just the authority of the WTO, and greater Congressional resentment at such multilateral bodies, but also broader economic and trade tensions between the US and Europe. The failure of normal diplomacy to resolve such a minor dispute as that on bananas shows how tricky relations have become.

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Crash victim thinks wife is an impostor

A LOVING husband turned cold against his wife because he believes she has been replaced by an impostor, a court was told yesterday. Alan Davies is convinced that his real wife of 31 years died in a car crash and he now refuses even to hug the woman who still shares his life.

Mr Davies, 52, was awarded £130,000 damages yesterday after it was claimed that his rare medical syndrome was caused by the crash that he and his wife, Christine, 50, both survived.

The husband suffered minor injuries and shock and his wife had whiplash. But he has flashbacks of his wife screaming and lying dead. In his psychological condition, known as Capgras Syndrome, patients suffer a break in the link between areas of the brain responsible for visual recognition and emotional response, and the mind tries to rationalise it by concluding that a familiar face has been replaced by an impostor.

After the crash in September 1995, in which another driver cut across the couple's car, Mr Davies, from Rhondda, South Wales, has been

Husband wins £130,000 after courts hear of rare syndrome, reports Simon de Bruxelles

forced to give up his job as a craft teacher at the Tonyandy Comprehensive School.

His wife, whom he now calls Christine II, told the High Court in Cardiff: "Before the accident he was an extrovert, very spontaneous, and emotional. He was sociable and animated. Every day when we got up for breakfast he would say 'Good morning, I love you' and would give me a kiss. We would go out a lot and had a very happy sex life."

"Our only contact now is when I give him a hug, but he doesn't respond. He doesn't want to talk about anything. Only our old friends come round because only they know not to get upset when Alan gets up and leaves the room

without saying a word." The couple's eldest daughter, Caroline Davies, 29, said: "Before the accident my dad was the life and soul of the party. Now they don't interact any more. Dad is constantly stressed by any show of affection."

Mr Davies said that he had been prescribed medication but did not always take it: "I have good days and bad days but I still believe my wife has died. We have discussed divorce but she doesn't want to."

Dr Sudad Jawad, a consultant psychiatrist, told the court: "When they came to see me he never acted as though he was sitting next to a real person. After two years of treating Alan I came to the conclusion that his delusion is fixed and will sadly never go away."

Mr Davies sued the other driver, Thomas Williams, 55, for loss of earnings and damages. Mr Williams, from Abertillery, near Newport, admitted liability for the crash but denied causing the psychiatric problems. After Mr Davies's case was put in court, Mr Williams's insurance company offered £130,000 plus costs.

Mr Justice Maurice Kay said: "This is a sensible conclusion. It has been a tragic case but the right outcome has been reached."

The couple declined to comment as they left court, walking several feet apart.

Capgras Syndrome is named after one of two French doctors who identified it in the 1920s. It can be brought on by severe depressive illness or a head injury. A leading authority, the psychiatrist Dr David Enoch, said: "It is one of the rarest psychiatric illnesses in the world. The victim is usually a man who is under the delusion that his wife is a double."

Alan Davies and his wife, whom he calls Christine II

£135,000 for mechanic frightened by police

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A CAR mechanic has been unable to face work since the day he emerged from beneath the vehicle he was working on to be confronted by eight police officers pointing guns at him.

Graham Parker was awarded £135,000 compensation against Hampshire police yesterday. He was not in court to hear the award because he had suffered a panic attack and gone home.

Salisbury Crown Court was told that Mr Parker, 35, from Portsmouth, had suffered post-traumatic stress since the incident in 1993 when police, mistakenly believing him to be an armed criminal, surrounded him outside his house as he repaired a car that had been linked to two firearms incidents in Liverpool.

At an earlier hearing Mr Parker said: "I saw eight guns pointing at me. I heard a double click. I thought I'm dead."

Hampshire police, who are to appeal, claimed Mr Parker had exaggerated his problems. A spokeswoman said: "There is no evidence that he cannot tolerate being in other working environments."

Health officers found meal hard to swallow

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE banquet laid on by a hotel for environmental health officers left them distinctly impressed. The next day the Webberton Hotel, near Weston-super-Mare, was raided by council inspectors who reported it for breaching hygiene regulations.

The 260 officials from around Britain had expected a feast that would be the highlight of a conference on air quality held by the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection. First they were told the chef had forgotten to take the salmon mousse out of the freezer and there would be no starter. When the main course arrived they refused to eat it. They complained about the wine and that the service was poor. When the time came to pay the bill they refused.

The embarrassed host, Piers Furlong, chief environmental health officer with the local Sedgemoor District Council, in Somerset, said: "The meal was a disaster. The salmon mousse never arrived because it was still frozen. The

main course was appalling — I couldn't eat it and the wine was not very nice. It was extremely disappointing for premises of that standard. It's a shame because I have had some very good meals there."

Mr Furlong says the next day's inspection was coincidental, a claim the hotel's manager, Sanjay Kantaria, finds as hard to swallow as frozen salmon mousse. Mr Kantaria said: "It was surprising they sent two inspectors instead of the normal one and the inspection took four hours instead of the normal 20 minutes."

The hotel has agreed to waive the bill and Mr Kantaria said: "We admit that a junior chef made a mistake which meant we could not serve a starter but we acted responsibly in not serving something which could have been a health risk. There was no problem with the wine or service."

Sedgemoor's environment committee has recommended that the hotel be cautioned for the faults. The hotel's solicitor said that these were minor and had soon been corrected.

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Fake fur and hipsters: Dolce e Gabbana are tired of creating everyday wear

Kitsch and colour collide on the Milanese catwalk

Lisa Armstrong sees Dolce e Gabbana present a tongue-in-cheek show, complete with Day-Glo coats and lime python boots, designed to surprise rather than sell



THE chilly Milanese rain beat down on a tautly-fit marquee that had been erected a couple of days earlier in the courtyard of the Via San Damiano headquarters of the fashion designers Dolce e Gabbana. Scores of crimson and pale coral roses bloomed round ponds filled with goldfish and lit with flickering church candles. A rustic scene of artfully chipped chairs and tables set with Parmesan and loaves rested mid-catwalk, bunches of grapes drooped atmospherically about the place.

The scene was Sicily. Domenico Dolce's birthplace and the source of much of the duo's creative impetus. The time was the feast day of Madonna — Mother of Christ that is, though it could have just as easily been the diva.

Dolce e Gabbana's Sicily is part Fellini, part Roberto Rossellini and part *Carry On*, hence the sheer mantilla cloaks worn over semi-transparent leggings (something of a trend, worryingly) in the show's finale. Hence too, the hipster "peasant" skirts, fashioned from nylon shaggy fur, and the roughly finished cropped sheepskin jackets worn with very low-cut, beaded hipster caps.

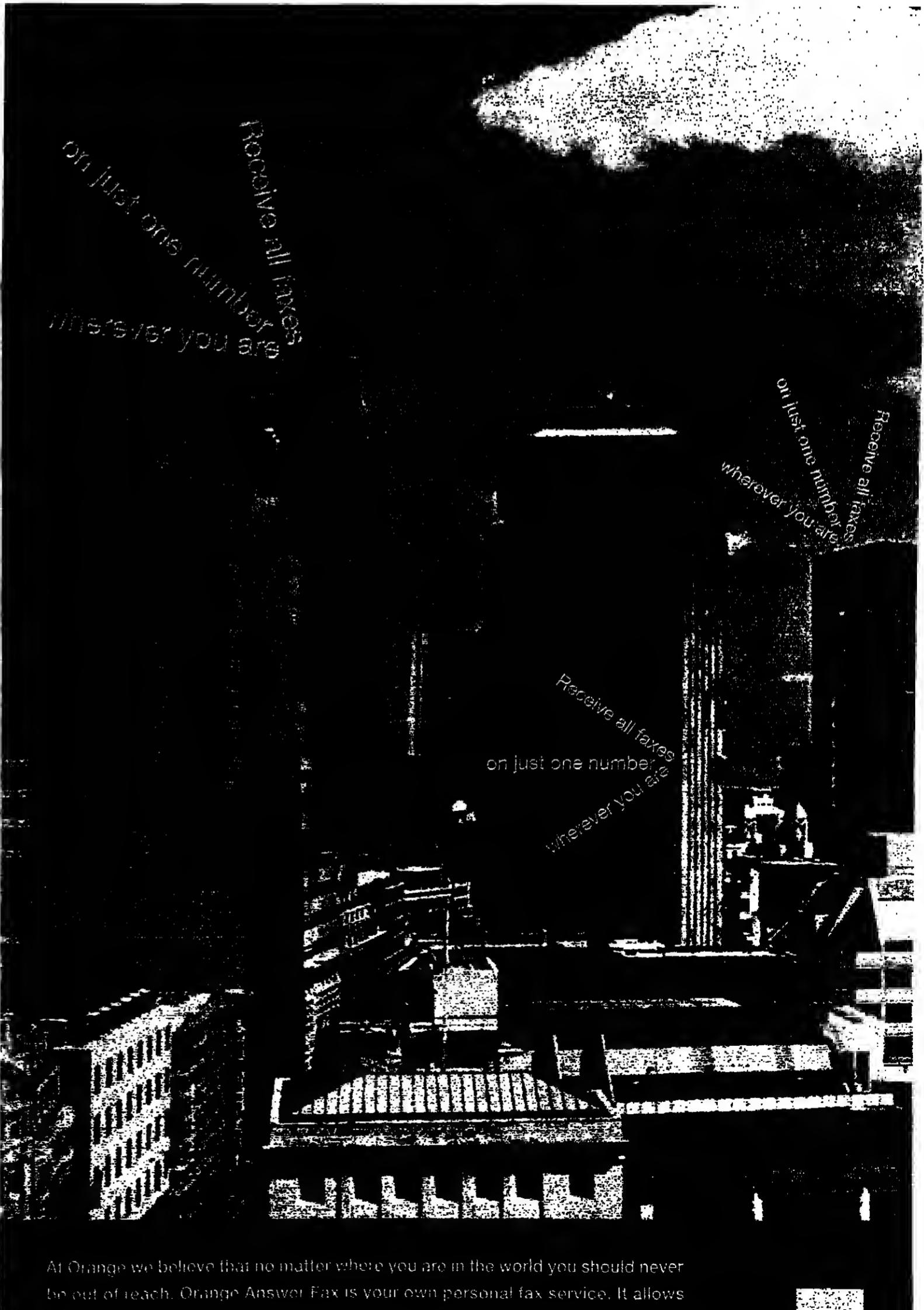
It is all deliciously tongue in cheek and some of it is no doubt destined to end up in a fashion museum as a monument to late 20th century kitsch. How much of it will sell is another, probably irrelevant, question since so much

of the designers' turnover is fuelled by accessories, scent and pictures of Madonna the diva in their frocks.

The heavily beaded fluorescent yellow plastic mini raincoat, a beaded orange plastic belt doubling as a skirt, and the lime python boots with mirrored heels ("so you can sit down and put your make-up on while staring at your boots") were particularly fine examples of fashion as a photo-op and to hell with the dreary business of making clothes women can wear every day.

Beyond the neon colours, the chunky multicoloured coats and jackets that were made from goat that had been made to look like monkey hair, were some dazzling pieces. Beaded capris and belts will tempt the rock star brigade while the long, Day-Glo coats with bracelet sleeves that were worn over those leggings will look rather elegant when they are made up in the inevitable black.

Before they unveiled their catwalk collection yesterday, Stefano Gabbana, 39, and Domenico Dolce, 41, announced that they were becoming tired of the fashion system, which they declared onerous and oppressive. Those addicted to the pair's inimitable brand of corsetry-dressing will be relieved to know, however, that the length of their show (which comprised 150 outfits) suggested they were not thinking of shaking off their shackles any time too soon.



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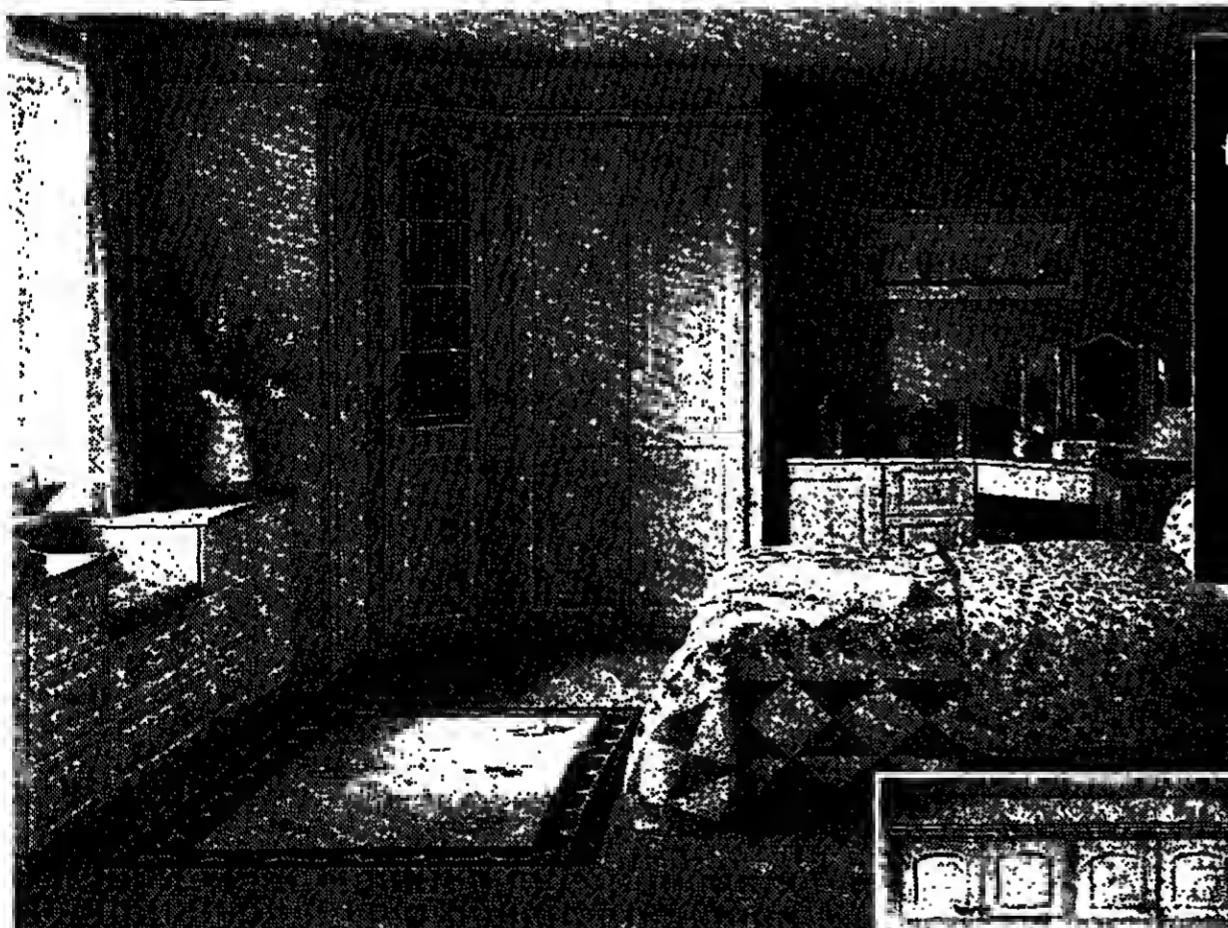
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SHARPS
Bedrooms

Universities offered cash bait for poorer students

Budget increase will provide
thousands more places in higher
education, reports John O'Leary

UNIVERSITIES are to receive
a 5 per cent "premium" for every
student they recruit from
poor areas to try to ensure that
an extra 45,000 higher-education
places go to groups under-
represented on campuses.

A £75 million budget in-
crease has enabled the Higher
Education Funding Council
for England to exceed the Gov-
ernment's plans to increase
the number of students. Most
of the new places will be on
sub-degree courses, largely in
further education colleges.

A £20 million fund has been
set aside to broaden the range
of people going into higher
education. Students from under-
privileged homes are the priority
but the aim is also to in-
crease the number of part-time
and mature students.

The council has surveyed
the postcode of every full-time
student and given some univer-

sities more than £400,000 as
an incentive to attract students
from poor areas. Of the 76 uni-
versities, Derby, Huddersfield,
Luton, Sunderland and Staff-
ordshire will benefit most
from the "premium". Even Ox-
ford and Cambridge, which at-
tract a high proportion of stu-
dents from affluent homes, will
receive about £150,000 each.

As a result of changes to the
Oxford funding system, the
funding council's budget of
£4,216 million for 1999-2000 in-
cludes £36 million previously
paid direct to the Oxford and
Cambridge colleges. Extra
funds to reward high-quality
work and to maintain historic
buildings have helped to en-
sure that both of the ancient
universities receive a funding
increase this year close to the
rate of inflation.

University College London
and Luton University will re-
ceive the biggest year-on-year
rise under the settlements an-
nounced yesterday. Exeter
University and Queen Mary and
Westfield College, London,
which had poor research
assessments, and Middlesex
and Thames Valley universi-

THE WINNERS AND LOSERS

BIGGEST RAISES	%
University College London	6.1
Luton	5.6
King's College London	5.1
Brunel	4.8
Greenwich	4.8
Anglia Polytechnic University	4.8
Goldsmiths' College London	4.8
Leicester	4.5
Southampton	4.5
Derby	4.2
SMALLEST INCREASES	
Exeter	0.8
Abdullah	0.5
Queen Mary & Westfield	0.5
Thames Valley	0.5
Birmingham	0.9
Bath	1.0
Birkbeck College London	1.0
Open University	1.3
Warwick	1.4
York	1.4



University College London: biggest budget increase

ties, which failed to meet last
year's recruitment targets, re-
ceive the lowest settlement.

The settlement for Thames
Valley, whose vice-chancellor
resigned after a critical inspection
report, is conditional on the
submission later this

month of a plan to tackle ac-
ademic and financial problems.

Brian Fender, the funding
council's chief executive, said
that extra money would be
available to tackle previous un-
derinvestment in university
buildings and equipment.

NEWS IN BRIEF
Divers may
have been
garrotted

A British deep-sea diver, be-
lieved drowned in the Persian
Gulf may have been caught
in a double murder. Robert
Glaister, 28, and his New Zea-
land colleague Aaron Harper
were found in the sea in Jan-
uary, two weeks after they were
missing from their ship off
Dubai. At the time the auth-
orities made no mention of possi-
ble foul play but when the bodies
were returned to their native
countries pathologists dis-
covered both men had throat
injuries consistent with hav-
ing been garrotted.

At an inquest in Rochdale,
Mr Glaister's home town, po-
lice said murder squad detec-
tives would fly to the Gulf to
make further inquiries. The in-
quest was adjourned.

Suspect released

The last of five people ques-
tioned in the past week by
Irish detectives investigating
the Omagh bombing has been
freed. He was released with-
out charged after three days
interrogation at Monaghan
police station.

Arctic ice thins

Parts of the Greenland ice
sheet are thinning by more
than a metre each year, Nasa
scientists have found. They be-
lieve that the ice is sliding in-
creasingly quickly into the
sea, causing a faster rise in sea
levels than melting alone.

Ferry holed

The *Stena Explorer*, ferrying
more than 300 people and
cars from Anglesey to Dun-
laoghaire, was believed to
have been holed below the wa-
terline when it hit a pier wall
while attempting to dock in
Ireland. No-one was hurt.

Pedigrees forged

A Lincolnshire dog breeder
sold dogs that she falsely
claimed had Kennel Club ped-
igrees. Jill Allen, who admit-
ted forgery and trying to ob-
tain money by deception, was
bailed at Nottingham Crown
Court pending sentencing.

Murder charge

A man has appeared before
Loughborough magistrates
charged with murdering
Rachel Glenn, 15, whose body
was found in Charnwood Wa-
ters, Leicestershire. Anthony
Holland, 21, of no fixed abode,
was remanded in custody.

Licence refused

A former racing driver who
lost an arm in a crash has fail-
ed to convince magistrates in
Swindon that he is fit to drive.
Donald Day, 64, who steers
with his knees while changing
gear, was appealing against
the revocation of his licence.

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Divers may have been garrotted

Suspects released

of PE pupils couch toes

Every hole

Players for

Musician

Giant body to head sale of the millennium

THE 90ft body that will dominate the Millennium Dome is to be the prize lot in a huge sale of the exhibition's contents when it closes at the end of 2000.

Theme parks, museums and those who have everything are expected to bid in excess of £10 million for the giant sculpture of a man and woman embracing, which houses the Body Zone. The exhibit, which is as tall as Nelson's Column, features an interactive tour of bodily functions from heartbeats to hangovers.

The sculpture could be sold abroad or to a private individual who would be under no obligation to open it to the public, even though it is part-funded by lottery money. The successful bidder will have to invest further in a building to house it: the body, designed by Nigel Coates and made of glass-reinforced concrete, is not weatherproof.

Other exhibits, such as the Mind Zone designed by Zaha Hadid, and the Spirit Level, which has attracted controversy for its lack of Christian content, will also be for sale. Only two zones will not be available: the rights to the Mobility and Communication zones will be retained by their sponsors, Ford and BT, though both are likely to remain on public view.

The Dome's attractions, including the central show, will cost £191 million out of its total budget of £758 million, with £400 million coming from the National Lottery.

The New Millennium Experience Company (NMEC) will not say how much is being spent on individual zones but the Body Zone is understood to be one of the more expensive at more than £10 million.

"All the assets of NMEC will be up for sale," a spokesman for the company said. "Art galleries or museums will

All the Dome's contents can be bought at the end of next year, reports Mark Henderson

be able to acquire internationally famous icons of cultural value."

NMEC plans to sell the contents individually and it is not envisaged that any will remain within the Dome.

The future of the Dome itself, which cost £300 million to build, will be decided by an international competition launched yesterday by Lord Falconer of Thoroton, the Government's shareholder in NMEC.

More than 1,000 companies

have been invited to make bids and the final decision will be made next year. Early suggestions include a conference or shopping centre, a sports stadium, a theme park or a film studio.

There will be no reserve price but working accounts suggest that it will go for at least £50 million. It will not necessarily be sold to the highest bidder: the competition will take into account how proposals will contribute towards the regeneration of the Greenwich peninsula.

Greenwich Council will also have to grant planning permission for the new use, following a full public consultation. Permission was granted for the Dome itself on the understanding that it would be environmentally friendly, the ban on car parking was one condition.

Lord Falconer said: "We want a fitting use for the Dome that preserves its design integrity, in keeping with



The Body Zone is expected to go on sale for £10 million

Australia turns down day of fame in Dome

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

IN A gesture that would make Barry Humphries's alter ego, Sir Les Patterson, drool, Australia has declined the offer of a day in the Millennium Dome to showcase its arts, history and civilisation.

The Australians have informed the exhibition organisers that it would take at least two days to do justice to their long list of cultural achievements.

A nation a day is being invited to Greenwich as part of the "Our Town's Story" exhibition, which is being sponsored by McDonald's, the hamburger restaurant chain. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has assigned a civil servant to work with the organisers, the New Millennium Experience Company, to persuade countries to join in.

South Africa, the United States, France, Canada and Japan have so far said they would like to join the storytellers in the Dome, on what will be

called the "World Stage". So far 199 of the 209 local education authorities in the United Kingdom have signed up to send a delegation.

The £50 million National Programme for the millennium exhibition is being launched today by Michael Grade, the chairman of the Dome's creative review group. A new initiative, Reach for the Sky, aimed at helping teenagers to make career choices for the next millennium, is being announced, with sponsorship from the broadcaster BSkyB. It will give 1,200 people aged 14 to 16 the chance of four days intensive work experience in science and technology, the environment, journalism, sport, entertainment or the community.

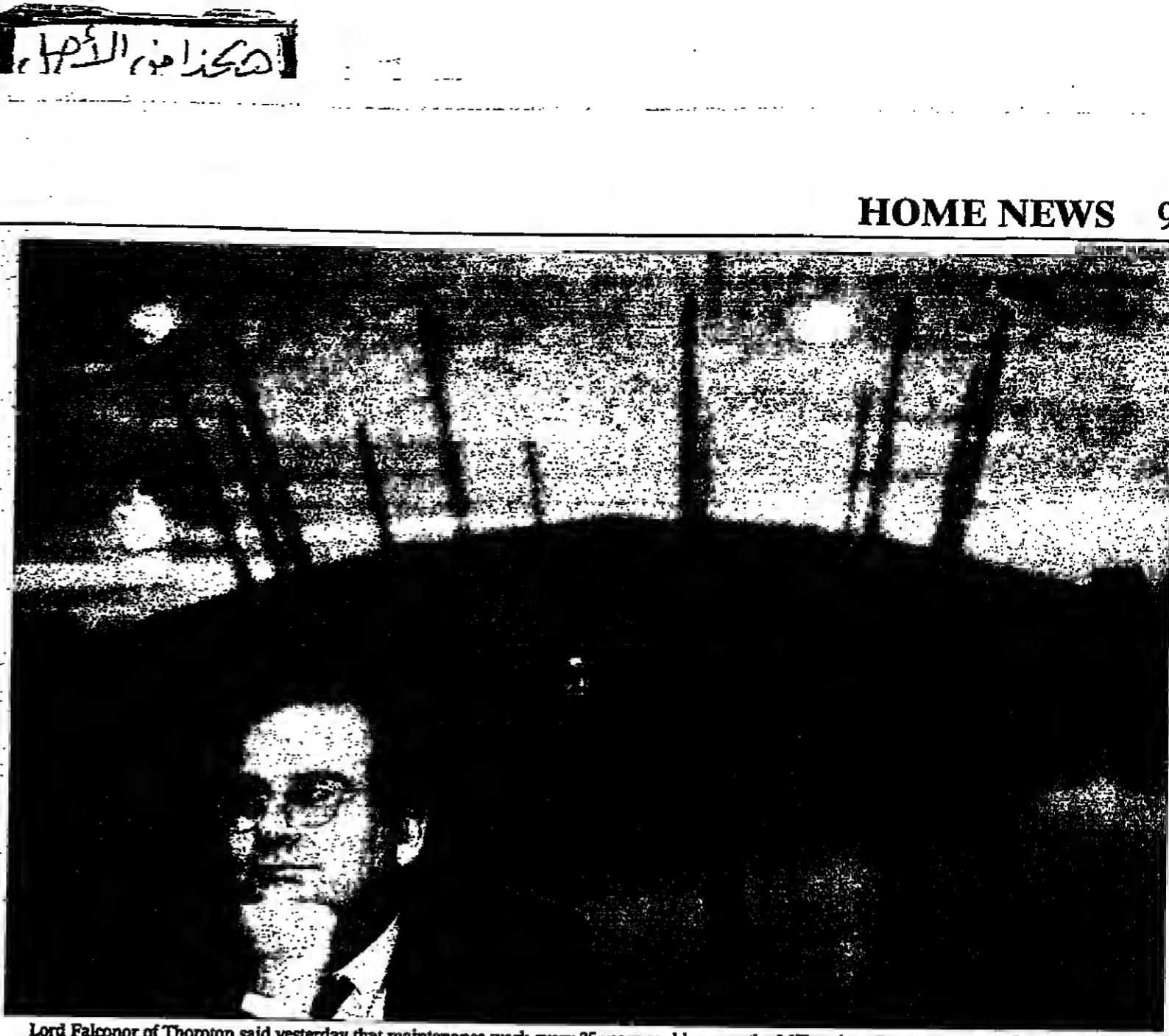
Other elements of the National Programme include FutureTalk, SchoolNet 2000 and the National Skills Festival. The organisers claim everyone can take part.

Children can get involved by joining the 6,000 schools that have already registered to enter the "Voices of Promise" contest to compose a song for the millennium. They can also join the 12,000 schools involved in the Tesco SchoolNet 2000 Internet "Domesday Book", which will go live in the Dome next year.

Everybody over the age of nine can get a free e-mail address from BT as part of the FutureTalk initiative, which aims to improve communication skills. Everyone can also contribute to their community's "Our Town's Story".



Patterson will miss out on cultural opportunity



Lord Falconer of Thoroton said yesterday that maintenance work every 25 years could ensure the Millennium Dome could last "for generations".

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Vanessa staff sacked over fake guests

By ELIZABETH JUDGE

THE BBC has sacked three members of staff from *The Vanessa Show* over allegations that fake guests appeared on the programme.

A fourth received a formal warning and was moved to another department and a freelance worker had his contract terminated as a result of a three-week investigation.

The daytime talk show hosted by Vanessa Feltz features traumatised guests making emotional confessions. It has been under attack since reports last month alleged that researchers had booked actors from a London agency to pose as members of the public.

A programme on domestic violence featured a "battered wife" who was really an unmarried actress and two strippers who had never met were recruited to play feuding sisters. A London businessman claimed that he was paid £100 for each guest he supplied to the show.

The BBC immediately suspended five members of the team, two producers and a researcher and launched an investigation.

The corporation also introduced new measures to stop fake guests appearing on chat shows. Guests must now provide identification and sign a declaration that states their contribution will be "entirely honest and truthful".

A BBC spokeswoman said:



Feltz: her show has come under attack

"The investigation has not uncovered any evidence to prove that staff knowingly booked fake guests." She added that no other members of the *Vanessa* team would be questioned. The staff are not being named because they have 14 days to appeal against the decision.

A number of "confessional" shows and documentaries have recently been exposed as fake. Bogus guests have also appeared on ITV's rival programme *Trisha*.

Last week Channel 4 was fined £150,000 by the Independent Television Commission because it broadcast a documentary about young rent boys in which key scenes were faked. In *Too Much Too Young* *Chickens* members of the production team posed as rent boys and their clients in three scenes. Channel 4 admitted

that a "deliberate and organised deception took place".

Another Channel 4 programme, *Daddy's Girl*, was not shown after it emerged that the subjects had lied about their relationship.

Carlton was fined £2 million in January for showing *The Connection*, a documentary about the Colombian drugs trade that contained fake scenes.

The Independent Television Commission has written to independent and satellite broadcasters demanding reassurances about the authenticity of confessional shows.

Last week, following the claims about *The Vanessa Show*, the BBC governors issued a statement expressing serious concerns about standards. "The board will not tolerate fakes masquerading as fact," they said.



Kathlene Shafer-Imhoff fled after being arrested on a theft charge in South Wales



Alexius and Kathlene said to believe their father is dead

Hunt for American mother and girls

A JUDGE asked the public yesterday to help to find an American mother who vanished with her daughters after allegedly telling them their father had died in an accident.

Kathlene Shafer-Imhoff was divorced from her husband, Lars, a year ago. She fled with Alexius, 6, and Kathlene, 5, after a visit in July. Lawyers for Mr Imhoff sought help in Britain because his former wife was arrested on a charge of theft in Newport, South Wales, in January. She disappeared afterwards.

Sean McNally, solicitor for the father, said Mrs Shafer-Imhoff was a "Scarlet Pimpernel who uses disguise to avoid capture". He said the 34-year-old secretary may be travelling with her mother, Lonna Shafer, a businesswoman based in Switzerland. Mrs Shafer-Imhoff also uses the names Kathlene Anderson and Ashley Anderson.

Mr Imhoff, 38, a welder from North Dakota, has custody of the girls. At the High Court yesterday Mr Justice Sumner appealed for the public to watch out for them. Mr McNally said: "They do not attend school to our knowledge. They lead a peripatetic life with a mother who has told them their father is dead."

Anyone with information is asked to contact 0171 242 2877 or 0171 936 6000.

to challenge
s' sentences

Reith kept 'hate list' in his head

By ROBIN YOUNG

LORD REITH, the first Director-General of the BBC, had a mental hate list that included Winston Churchill, Earl Mountbatten, Field Marshal Montgomery and the philosopher Bertrand Russell, his daughter has disclosed.

Reith's personal animosities are detailed by Marista Leishman in an entry in *The Dictionary of Scottish Biography*. Mrs Leishman describes her father as an impossible man who was highly ambitious and kept a mental list of hatred in his head going back to the early days of the BBC.

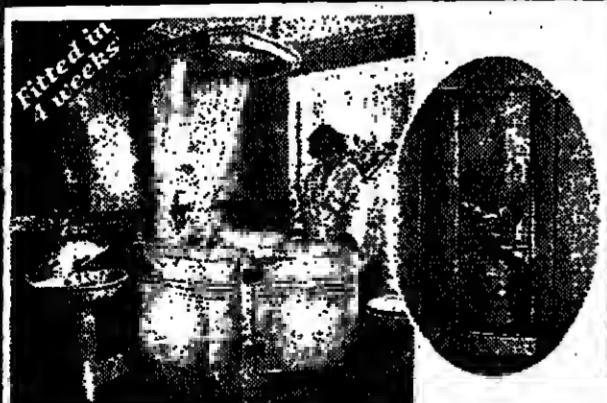
Churchill clashed with Reith, head of the corporation from 1927 to 1935, over how the BBC organised its coverage. Though Reith was given minus

marks during the war years, he felt that the Prime Minister was unresponsive and unwelcoming towards him.

Of the other names on her father's hate list, Mrs Leishman said yesterday: "It was just a clash of very big personalities and rivalries." There was, she insisted, no vendetta against those on the list. "My father was a fair man and it was very much a personal stance."

Mrs Leishman said that Lord Reith, who died aged 81 in 1971, was obsessed with work at the expense of his family. "You didn't converse with Lord Reith. You listened respectfully, trying from time to time to put in your bit—only to feel that it hadn't actually lodged anywhere."

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£6.50 to enter Westminster's House of Fun

PLANS to boost the Palace of Westminster as a tourist attraction could founder on peers' objections to a proposed £6.50 admission charge.

An estimated 160,000 extra visitors are expected in August and September next year if the proposals by Commons authorities are agreed. This would be half the 320,000 tourists who flock to Buckingham Palace over ten weeks each summer.

But many peers are set against the move, which would give the public an insiders' view of the Commons while MPs are on holiday. They believe people should get in for nothing. One senior peer said: "We are going to fight this. In principle, we feel that entrance should be free."

If the plans to charge for entry are defeated, it is unclear whether the proposals to open up the building to tourists would survive. MPs and peers would have to decide whether they could afford to spend thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money to cover costs.

MPs think the charge is acceptable to enable more people to see the home of Britain's democracy. The Commons is expected to back the plans when they reach the floor of the House just after Easter. But peers have put off making any decision until the summer.

The plans, scheduled to come into effect in the summer of 2000, would allow the public

But peers' protest against charges could end move to boost tourist numbers, writes James Landale

to visit the Palace of Westminster during the eight-week August and September recess.

Tickets would be bought from a new booth in Victoria Tower Gardens just beyond the Lords' end of the building on the Thames embankment.

Adults would pay £6.50; OAPs, students and the unemployed £4; and children £3.50.

The not-for-profit scheme is expected to break even after five years.

Visitors, armed with audio-guides, would start in the Lords and visit the Queen's Robing Room before passing through the Royal Gallery and the Prince's Chamber to the peers' Chamber. After walking through the Peers' Lobby, the Central Lobby, and the Members' Lobby, they would enter the Commons Chamber and Division lobbies.

After passing through St Stephen's Hall, they will then be able to see Westminster Hall, the huge room and original chamber saved from the

fire which destroyed the rest of the buildings in 1834.

A new range of souvenirs — items such as Lords' baseball caps and oven gloves are already available — would be on sale. Guides would answer queries.

The proposals have been backed by the Commons Administration Committee. Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, and Peter Jennings, the Serjeant-at-Arms. He said: "In my view, it is important that the Palace of Westminster is open for people to see either the political process or the Barry and Pugin extravaganza."

But the proposals have still to be agreed by the Lords Administration and Works Committee. "We do know that some members in the House of Lords have reservations about charging members of the public to come in," one Commons official said. Another said: "There is vociferous opposition within the Lords, particularly among crossbenchers, and the plans could be a further source of conflict between the two Houses." Some MPs are also opposed: 62 signed an Early Day Motion against the plans.

At least 70 per cent of visitors are expected to be overseas tourists. Existing arrangements for visitors will not be changed. Some 200,000 members of the public come to sit in the British Museum with 6.1 million visitors a year, followed by the National Gallery with 4.8 million visitors.

Leading article, page 23



In tune: the singer Patti Boulaye with William Hague after the Tory leader unveiled her yesterday as a potential Conservative candidate for the new London authority. Miss Boulaye, who must now be officially selected, said she wanted particularly to win over the black and minority vote

While most obtain tickets from their MPs, some queue for hours outside the Palace. Another 150,000 come as MPs' guests to take a tour round the so-called Line of Route.

Even if the scheme is backed, the Palace of Westminster will still be relatively low on the list of London's top tourist attractions. Top comes the British Museum with 6.1 million visitors a year, followed by the National Gallery with 4.8 million visitors.

ROUGH GUIDE TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Five things you may see:

1. Tony Blair's frontbench seat in the Commons Chamber.
2. The glided and awe-inspiring splendour of the House of Lords.
3. Madam Speaker, Betty Boothroyd's Commons throne.
4. Westminster Hall, where Sir Thomas More and Charles I were tried and sentenced to death.
5. The Terrace overlooking the Thames and Westminster Bridge. The best place for an evening drink in London.

Five things you may not know:

1. Spencer Perceval was the only British Prime Minister assassinated there (in 1812).
2. No one can ever be declared dead there because Parliament was once a Royal residence; MPs and peers who die are declared dead on arrival at hospital.
3. Annie's Bar: famous hotbed of intrigue and gossip, now pale image of former self.
4. The shower where Ron Brown, the former Labour MP for Edinburgh East, was caught with his researches.
5. The old cell hidden under the Big Ben clock tower where many visitors used to be incarcerated by the Serjeant-at-Arms.

Five things you won't see:

1. The Whips' Offices: the most secret of secret places in the whole of Westminster.
2. The Lords' rifle range where Old Labour MPs met researchers for illicit assignments.
3. Annie's Bar: famous hotbed of intrigue and gossip, now pale image of former self.
4. The shower where Ron Brown, the former Labour MP for Edinburgh East, was caught with his researches.
5. The old cell hidden under the Big Ben clock tower where many visitors used to be incarcerated by the Serjeant-at-Arms.

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Olympics chief tells MPs of vote scandal damage

BY JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S leading Olympics official yesterday admitted to MPs that the "cash-for-votes" scandal had been "damaging" in the extreme.

Craig Reddie, one of the two British members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), reiterated that no decision would be made on whether London should bid for future Games until a new system for selecting host cities had been put in place. Mr Reddie said he was hopeful that the IOC meeting in Lausanne, which will decide whether to expel members found to have received favours from bidding cities, would "begin the process of re-establishing" the movement's credibility.

At the meeting on March 17 and 18, the IOC is also expected to agree a new selection process and to give a vote of confidence to Juan Antonio Samaranch, its president, who has been ignoring worldwide calls to step down. Four members have already resigned and several more may be recommended for expulsion when the IOC completes its own investigation.

Mr Reddie told the Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee that "allegations made against a

number of IOC members are damaging in the extreme. I am aware that the process of resolving that causes constant public debate. That in itself is damaging."

The Chancellor said that the Tories were "denying choice to the British people". Their motto is to be "unprepared," he told cheering Labour MPs in the Commons. John Bercow, Conservative MP for Buckingham, said Mr Brown was trying to drag Britain into the euro "with a cost that he won't calculate" for a benefit he cannot quantify at a risk to the British people which he dare not admit".

Leading article, page 23

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tories are 'sidelined' by boycott

GORDON BROWN called the Conservatives a "marginalised sect" yesterday after they went ahead with their threat to boycott the first meeting of a cross-party group overseeing preparations for the euro.

The Chancellor said that the Tories were "denying choice to the British people". Their motto is to be "unprepared," he told cheering Labour MPs in the Commons. John Bercow, Conservative MP for Buckingham, said Mr Brown was trying to drag Britain into the euro "with a cost that he won't calculate" for a benefit he cannot quantify at a risk to the British people which he dare not admit".

Leading article, page 23

Benefit tax move

Treasury plans to tax child benefit for higher earners were backed by the Social Security Select Committee yesterday.

It found that there was a powerful case for making higher-rate taxpayers pay tax on the child benefit they receive, in line with proposals set out by the Chancellor in last year's Budget. However, the MPs insisted that any revenue raised should be ringfenced for improving child benefit rates, in contrast to Mr Brown's plans.

an evening with

John le Carré

THE TIMES & DILLONS FORUM in association with The Word

Times readers are invited to a rare evening with John le Carré, one of Britain's best-selling novelists, on Sunday, March 28, at 7pm.

Introduced by the Editor of The Times, Peter Stothard, the internationally acclaimed author will talk about his life and work, and read from his latest novel *Single & Single*. If you would like to ask John le Carré a question, please e-mail johnlecarre@the-times.co.uk. For more details visit The Times/le Carré website at www.the-times.co.uk/lecarre.html.

The event, which forms part of The Word literary festival, will be held at the LSE Peacock theatre, Portugal Street, off Kingsway, London WC1. Tickets cost £9 and can be booked on 0171-863 8222.

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Alaska stays cool as chronically ill win the right to get stoned

IT SHOULD be a mellow weekend for the dope smokers of Alaska. In a major step forward for a national legalisation campaign, Alaskans with permission from their doctor may now own up to three flowering marijuana plants and an ounce of the drug in smokeable form.

Alaska's medical marijuana law went into force yesterday despite stiff opposition from the state governor and other top officials. Passed after a campaign funded almost entirely by George Soros, the Hungarian-born financier, it de-

criminalises the drug for critically ill patients who say that it soothes their pain and boosts their appetite. In practice, critics argued, it has legalised marijuana at a stroke over an area nearly the size of Western Europe.

The new law allows sufferers of cancer, glaucoma, Aids-related illnesses and other "debilitating" conditions to grow their own marijuana

na without fear of arrest. It also requires the state to set up a register of users' names and issue identification cards to ward off suspicious police.

Though similar to measures already passed in California, Washington, Oregon, Arizona and Nevada, the Alaskan law could prove a turning point in a nationwide crusade backed by film stars and

some doctors as well as legions of ex-hippies. It covers a thinly policed region larger than the other five states combined, where the freedoms of an increasingly crowded frontierland are jealously defended and the marijuana is as potent as any in the world.

Identification cards for legal users of the drug have not yet been issued even though the law was approved by 60 per cent of the state's voters in last November's election. Police have so far taken a conciliatory approach to its enforcement.

"Nothing could be worse than to

jack up some dying cancer patient to a drug charge," Del Smith, Alaska's deputy commissioner of public safety, said after the election. Police are now establishing new protocols for asking suspects why they need the drug.

In 1975 the state Supreme Court ruled that possession of small amounts of marijuana, even for recreational purposes, was allowed under a privacy clause in the Alaskan constitution.

Declared illegal again in 1990, marijuana has nonetheless become the relaxant of choice for

thousands of Aids and cancer patients across America.

In his guise as a philanthropist, Mr Soros backed California's 1996 medical marijuana initiative and paid \$126,000 (£78,000) towards gathering signatures and advertising for the Alaskan initiative last year. Government efforts to undermine the medical marijuana drive have founded in the courts and the media.

Dan Lungren, the California Attorney General who vowed to prosecute dope-smokers whatever their illness, became a national laughing stock in the Doonesbury cartoon strip. Later in 1996 an attempt by the Clinton Administration to remove the licences of doctors who wrote prescriptions for marijuana use by their patients was struck down in a federal court.

The American Medical Association has refused to endorse marijuana as a therapy for grave illnesses, but sufferers claim that it lacks the side effects of prescription drugs. As one Alaskan with Aids put it: "Sure, I'm stoned for half an hour, but that's something I can live with."

DiCaprio in \$45m suit over fist fight

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

THE *Titanic* star Leonardo DiCaprio has been served with a \$45 million (£27 million) lawsuit by a screenwriter who claims the actor invited a friend to hit him in a row over his girlfriend, the actress Elizabeth Berkley.

Roger Wilson, also an actor who used to sing on Broadway and fronted his own rock band, says he had to abandon his singing career after he was punched in the throat outside a Manhattan restaurant by one of Mr DiCaprio's friends. He alleges that the star instigated the attack by shouting: "We'll go kick his arse." A lawyer for Mr DiCaprio rejected the allegations as "absolutely false".

The jealous quarrel began when Mr DiCaprio met Miss Berkley, who played a stripper in *Showgirls*, at the premiere of his film *The Man in the Iron Mask*. Through intermediaries, he tried to invite her to dinner but was rebuffed. Two days later Mr Wilson went to the Manhattan restaurant to tell the actor to lay off. Mr Wilson was allegedly surrounded by eight members of Mr DiCaprio's entourage and he was punched. Mr DiCaprio was later seen sporting a black eye. The suit also names others in the DiCaprio party.

Pilot in cable car tragedy is cleared

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME AND IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

ITALIANS yesterday reacted with shock and anger to the acquittal of a US Marine pilot on all charges of reckless flying when his jet sheared a gondola cable above an Italian ski resort, killing 20 people just over a year ago.

Massimo D'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, who is visiting the United States, described the verdict as "disconcerting" and "baffling". The Italian leader said he would like to know the reasoning behind the judgment and added that he would seek clarification from President Clinton today on whether further legal steps were possible in the US. "If those accused are not guilty then we would like to know who is," Signor D'Alema said.

A court-martial jury of eight officers cleared Captain Richard Ashby, 31, an officer with an impeccable record, on 20 counts of involuntary manslaughter, dereliction of duty and other charges that carried a maximum penalty of 200 years in prison.

The verdict, after a five-week trial at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, was greeted with outrage by Valdo Spini, chairman of the parliamenta-



Captain Ashby arrives at court to hear the verdict

ry defence committee, who said: "The blood froze in my veins when I heard it."

Italian authorities had wanted the four-man crew of the

Prowler jet to be tried in Italy, but the Pentagon, whisked them out of the country, citing America's right to hold any trial in the US under Nato treaty provisions.

Signor Spini said that the London Convention, under which servicemen have the right to be tried in their own countries, needed to be revised "otherwise this is the kind of verdict which we will get".

He said that the families of the victims and the MPs who represented them would continue to search for the truth. "Someone must be to blame, and if it is not the US crew, then who is?" he asked.

The court-martial prosecution accused Captain Ashby of "flat-hatting" — aviation slang for reckless flying — during the 42-minute training flight. They said he violated the mission's speed limit of 517 mph and the altitude restriction of 2,000ft. The jet, travelling at 621 mph, cut the cable 370ft above the valley floor.

But in an embarrassing admission, the prosecution agreed that the ski lift was not shown on maps issued to Captain Ashby and his crew. The defence argued that even a

highly experienced pilot could not have missed hitting the cables after veering into the ski area. Expert testimony showed that an optical illusion caused by the mountain terrain could have made him think he was flying higher than he really was.

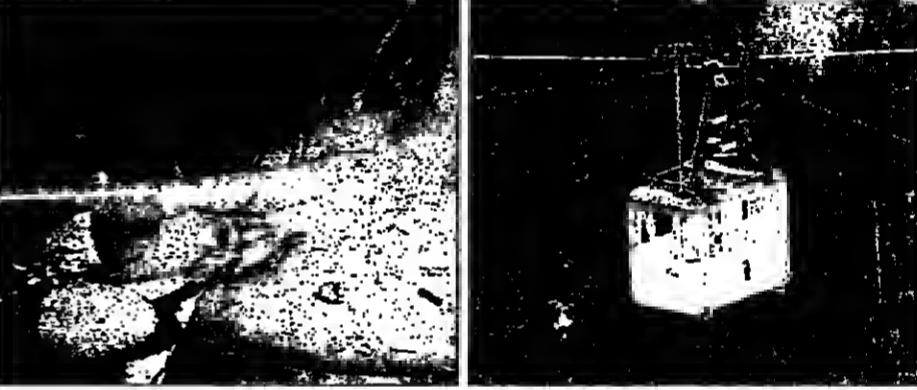
Mauro Gimmozi, the Mayor of Cavalese, the mountain resort where the disaster occurred, said he was appalled. "This is a profound injustice, an affront to common sense and an insult to the families of those who died," he said.

"There is no doubt in any of our minds that the US pilots were to blame. Their recklessness caused the deaths. They were flying criminally low. We had warned time after time that an accident was going to happen because of these low flights through the valley."

The skiers who died were from Italy, Germany, Belgium, Austria and the Netherlands. Lawyers for their families are seeking damages from the US Government. The Cavalese car recently resumed working, and the resort has tried to put the deaths behind it in the current skiing season.



The scene of devastation left by the cable-car disaster, above, damage suffered by the Prowler jet, below left, and the matching gondola that survived the accident, below



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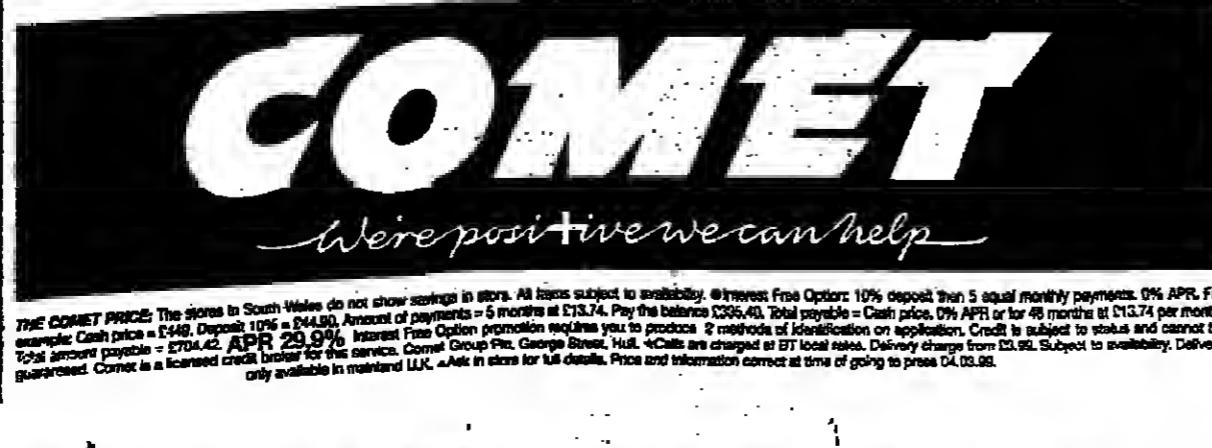
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THE TIMES FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

Reformers set for big triumph in Iran's local polls

BY MICHAEL THEODOULOU

REFORMERS supporting President Khatami of Iran, including many women, appear set for a stunning victory in the Islamic Republic's first local elections, which have highlighted the waning influence of his hardline opponents. Moderates look certain to capture 13 of the 15 council seats in the capital, Tehran.

"This is a turning point for Iran," said Sadeq Sami, a British-educated publisher. The conservatives, who still control most centres of power, would have "to obey the people's choice", he added.

That remains to be seen, however. Despite his huge popular mandate, Mr Khatami's opponents have so far succeeded in sowing down the pace of his reforms and can be relied on to contest bitterly the erosion of their power.

Rubbing salt into the hardliners' wounds was the prominence of leading progressive candidates. The Tehran vote was headed by Abdullah Nouri, a key Khatami supporter and former Interior Minister who was impeached by the conservative-dominated parliament last year because of his support for greater social, political and cultural freedom. He is now well placed to take up the influential post as the Mayor of Tehran.

Hardliners even failed to take control of the holy city of Mashad, a traditionally con-

servative bastion where reformists and independents were leading the vote.

The landmark election was about far more than filling seats on village, town and city councils. It was introduced by Mr Khatami to boost democracy at a grass-roots level and decentralise power that has been mainly in the hands of the clerical establishment since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Victory for the reformers will give them a strong power base from which to challenge the conservatives' hold on parliament in elections next year.

"This has set a precedent. People simply won't put up with hardliners attempting to vet moderate candidates as they have in the past," said a European diplomat.

A conservative screening body had attempted to block Mr Nouri and other prominent reformers from standing in last Friday's polls, but was overruled by the President.

The results, due to be finalised in the next few days, should also boost the role of women in Iranian society and politics. They led the polls in at least 20 cities, even though they made up just 5,000 of the 300,000 hopefuls contesting some 200,000 seats across the country.

Fatemeh Khatami, the President's 61-year-old sister, was the winner in the desert town of Ardekan, capturing nearly three times as many votes as the next candidate.

Third placed in Tehran, the most strongly contested city, was Jamileh Kadivar, a former adviser to Mr Khatami and the wife of the popular Culture Minister, Ayatollah Mohajerani, another bête noire of the old guard.

Proof of the determination of Mr Khatami's opponents to demonstrate their authority came just hours after the polls opened when they struck back by jailing Mohsen Kadivar, a leading liberal cleric close to the President.

His arrest on charges of slander and subversion caused uproar among reformists and led to street protests in his native town of Shiraz in the south of the country.

Khatami: his hardline foes will fight on bitterly

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Heroes of Iran's Islamic revolution are familiar symbols on the streets of Tehran

OVERSEAS NEWS 15

British car's Tehran twin rules the road

Iran relies on its Hillman Hunter, writes Michael Theodoulou in Tehran

For Westerners, Ayatollah Khomeini's stern gaze is the most enduring symbol of the 20-year-old Islamic revolution, but for Tehran's motorists equally durable is the Paykan — a locally produced identical twin of Britain's long-forgotten Hillman Hunter.

Seven out of ten cars on the congested streets of the Iranian capital are Paykans, while once popular Chevrolets, Pontiacs and other chrome-bumpered hunks of Midwestern steel have long gone the way of the Shah.

The Paykan's horse and chariot emblem is an immediately recognisable in Iran as the silver lady of a Rolls-Royce in Britain. There the comparison ends: the Paykan is to Iranians what the Trabant was to the East Germans, a basic but affordable means of transport.

Beige and cream appear the most exciting colours on offer, while working seatbelts are regarded as an unnecessary luxury by Tehran's steel-nerved taxi drivers. Paykan owners have a love-hate relationship with their cars; sometimes they accuse them of being outdated and uneconomical, but all are fiercely proud of the plucky vehicle

a virtual ban on car imports that protects local production and conserves foreign currency. The locally assembled Peugeot 405s are snazzier, but three times the price.

Iran's state-owned Khodro Company began assembling the Paykan in 1967 from kits supplied by Hillman's parent company in Britain, the long defunct Rootes Motor Company, later taken over by Chrysler UK. When that, in turn, was absorbed by Peugeot in 1989, Iran bought the British company's equipment and began producing the Paykan virtually on its own.

The car was due to be replaced by a more advanced model in 1978, but the Islamic revolution, which marked its 20th anniversary this week, gave it a new lease of life as international investment for joint ventures dried up.

However, the winds of change have caught up with the Paykan. It is to be phased out of production gradually as a more powerful and aerodynamic model comes on to the market in the next 18 months. Yet with two million devoted owners, the old Paykan will be seen on streets here well into the new millennium.

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Yard joins FBI in the hunt for jungle killers

By STEWART TENDER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT, AND IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THREE Scotland Yard detectives flew to Kampala last night to help the Ugandan authorities hunt for the Rwandan rebel gang who killed four British tourists.

The team is being led by Detective Superintendent Ken Woodward, a senior officer with the Yard's Organised Crime Unit. The team will work with Ugandan police and army units and liaise with an FBI unit which was sent out earlier in the week.

The operation has been organised by the Foreign Office, which will foot the bill. The trip was agreed after discussions between Kampala and London and earlier this week the Uganda High Commission issued visas in readiness for the team.

Detective Superintendent Woodward was head of the murder and serious crime squad covering the centre of London. He recently transferred to the Yard as one of the senior officers in the Organised Crime Unit which provides officers for investigations abroad as well as for major cases in London. The other two officers have not been

named. The team will advise the Ugandans on how to uncover useful evidence at the scenes of the killings and use it for possible prosecutions or identifying the killers. They may also help in taking statements from survivors and will act as co-ordinators in Britain for any Ugandan trials.

Survivors of the attack may be key witnesses if the Ugandans manage to track down the gang and bring them back for a trial. British forensic science facilities could also be used to test evidence such as bullets, DNA traces and fibres. British laboratories are regarded as world leaders in many forensic science operations.

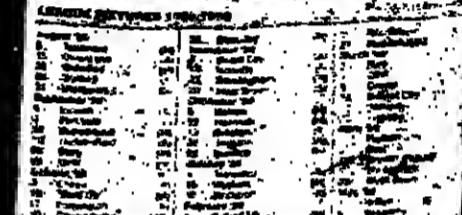
The speed with which the FBI sent two agents to help to investigate the murders in Uganda was the first test of its rapid response policy set up after the twin embassy bombings in East Africa last August. The pair arrived in Kampala on Wednesday, two days after eight foreign tourists were hacked to death by Rwandan rebels. The agents were described by a US government official as specialists in terrorist kidnappings.

The lessons of the East African bombings, in which some 240 people died, were that the FBI needed more flexibility and expertise to react to acts of terror against American citizens anywhere. The FBI found there were delays in arranging inoculations for some agents, not to mention passports. There was a scramble to organise forensic science specialists from FBI laboratories.

The FBI needed specialists on terrorist intelligence to help on the lessons of East Africa.

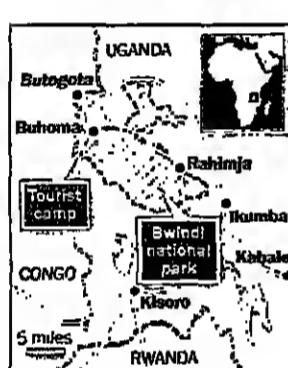


WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS F.C.



Ugandan troops, top, on patrol near Bwindi tourist camp in the Bwindi National Park, also known as the Impenetrable Forest. Yesterday the three tourist campers, in clearings in a steep-sided valley covered in thick forest, still showed the signs of Monday's attack by Rwandan rebels. Among the blackened wrecks of four vehicles were scattered belongings and pieces of paper. Below, a Wolverhampton Wanderers fixture list, above, and searched travel literature, left.

Photographs: Richard Pohle



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Chinese call on leaders to atone for massacre

TEN years after the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, relatives and friends of those killed or injured have petitioned the National People's Congress to apologise for the crackdown.

The defiant challenge to the state security apparatus was aimed to coincide with the annual session of China's rubber-stamp parliament which was preparing to meet today amid tight security.

The ghost of the Tiananmen massacre in Beijing on June 4, 1989, still haunts Chinese leaders even as they ponder widespread unrest and nationwide grumbling over official corruption and millions of job losses in state-run industries.

The 20 petitioners, one of whom is Professor Ding Zelin, whose 17-year-old son was shot dead when the People's Liberation Army crushed the student protest, wrote: "As survivors of that event, we — the injured, disabled and families of those killed — have lived through ten years of torment."

In a telephone interview with *The Times* yesterday, Professor Ding said that her home was surrounded by security men and that she was told to return indoors. She expects she will not be allowed out until the People's Congress session ends in ten days.

James Pringle
reports on a
growing public
disillusion with
Beijing's regime

Diplomats believe that China's leaders are worried about the boldness of opposition to their rule as the party fails to deliver on its compact with the 1.3 billion population, after disastrous policies.

That compact is: "You let us rule, and we will let you prosper." One foreign diplomat here said: "Prosperity and laid-off workers are a contradiction in terms, and the political opposition — small though it is — is showing it cannot be browbeaten by stiff jail terms."

The leadership is showing every sign of being afraid of the people."

Few here believe Beijing's claim that the economy grew 7.8 per cent last year, and ordinary Chinese for the first time openly express to foreigners their dismay about the Government and their future.

There are so many unemployed that the leaders may soon be unemployed," said a mechanical engineer in Kunming, Yunnan, who had been laid off and was driving a taxi.

It is against this backdrop that it is impossible for China's leaders to forget the massacre. Tiananmen Square has been closed for "renovation" and is surrounded by a high blue fence which will not be removed until July, well after the sensitive tenth anniversary of the massacre.

But in spite of this downturn it was predicted that defence spending would rise to record levels to compensate the People's Liberation Army for the loss of its widespread business interests ordered last year.



Jakarta riots mar Albright visit

AN INDONESIAN student is arrested by security forces during pitched battles in the streets of Jakarta yesterday, hours before a visit by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State.

Clashes broke out after about 300 soldiers and police tried to block a

march by some 2,000 students calling for President Habibie to step down.

Student leaders later claimed that dozens of protesters and six photographers and journalists had been in-

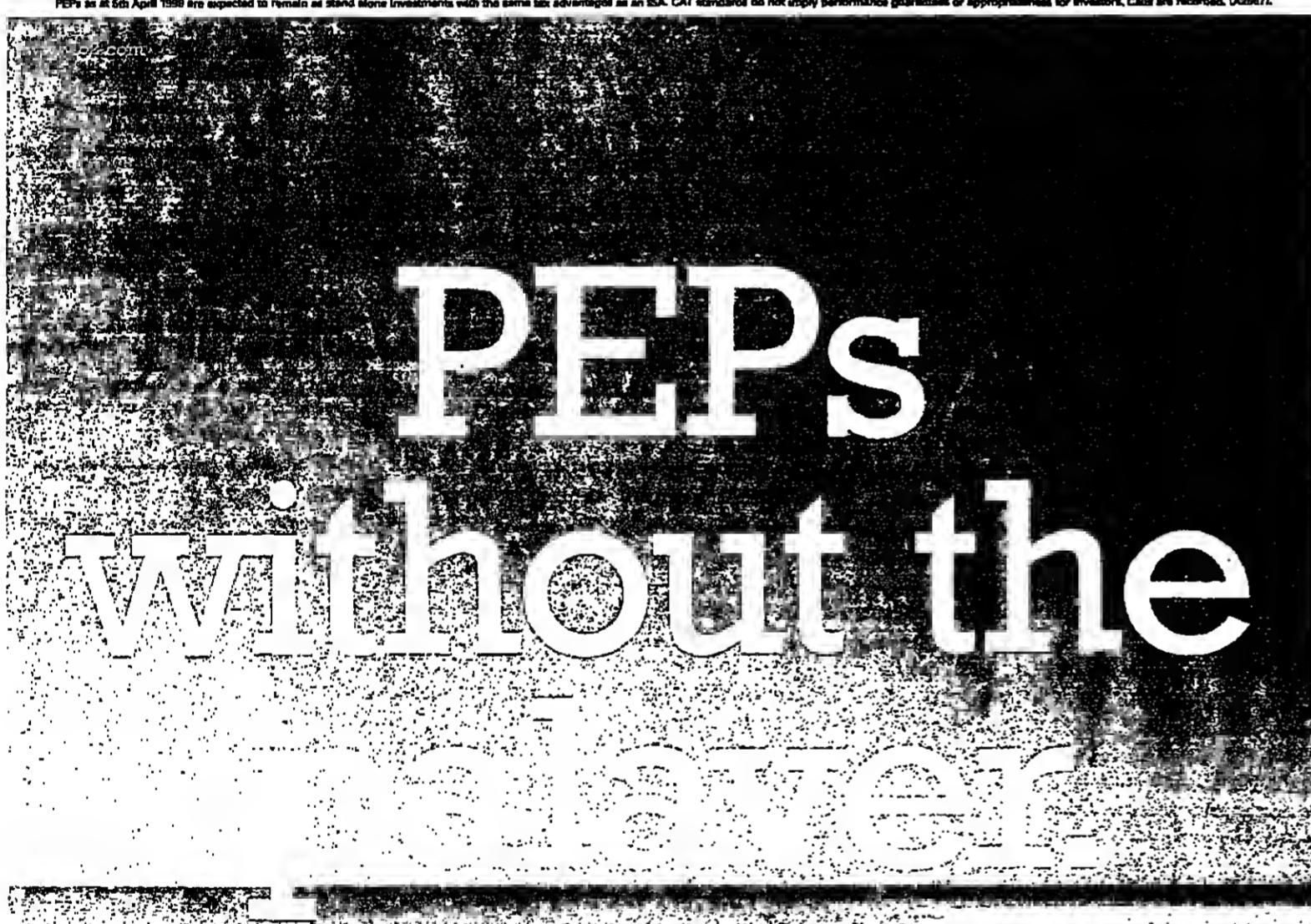
jured and 33 students had been arrested after troops waded into the crowd with batons.

The demonstration had started in the early afternoon with the students

shouting "Revolution now" as they marched two miles from the Selamat Campus of the University of Indonesia to the centre of Jakarta.

The protesters were demanding that a transitional government be installed until elections could be held. (AP/PA)

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Defeated Khmer Rouge enjoys profits of crime

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PAILIN, CAMBODIA

THE surrender of the Khmer Rouge and the swearing of allegiance to the Phnom Penh Government have given the impression that the movement, responsible for killing 1.7 million, is fatally crippled. But analysts in the Cambodian capital fear that there might now be a Khmer Rouge Trojan horse in their midst.

Profiting from gem and logging concessions in their enclave near Thailand, the Khmer Rouge is amassing wealth which it refuses to share with the Government. One analyst said the Khmer Rouge of Pailin has not integrated the autonomous western region with the rest of the country, and has not handed over a single cent from timber or gem revenues. "If their interests are threatened, the reconstituted Khmer Rouge of Pailin could put up a good fight."

The fanatical political movement that regarded using toothbrushes as a capital

crime because of its bourgeois influence is now involved in mafia-style rackets. Brothels, karaoke joints and jungle castles dot Pailin town.

Even as the worship of Mammon thrives — with the boom of discothèque music replacing the turgid anthems of hate — its rhetoric about defending the motherland remains unchanged. While the guerrilla group does appear to be seriously weakened, it has taken on a different identity, calling itself the Democratic National Union Movement.

Two of its most wanted leaders, former President Khieu Samphan, 67, and Nuon Chea, 71, live in palatial bungalows protected by a minefield. The two who wrote the blueprint for one of the century's most brutal regimes defected in December and the Government is now awaiting a United Nations report on whether there is evidence to try them.

But in the interest of peace

leaders such as King Norodom Sihanouk say the country, desperately needs them, they were given a tour by Hun Sen, the Prime Minister, and allowed to return to Pailin despite calls for their arrests. The Khmer Rouge says any trial must bring to book all those responsible, including America and Vietnam. The underlying threat is that, if only its leaders were targeted, "it would be war again."

"With so many former

Khmer Rouge now in the army, in theory it would be possible to seize power," said one observer in Phnom Penh.

But, to this correspondent

who has covered the brutal

war in Cambodia, the best

chance for peace is for the

rank and file to acquire a taste

of the best, and worst, of capi-

talism. Perhaps, once they

have become used to using

toothbrushes, it would be diffi-

cult to persuade the cadre to

take up arms again.

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THE SUN

Germans prepare for 'most dangerous mission since the war'

GERMANY'S Defence Minister, Rudolf Schärling, gave a warning yesterday that the peacekeeping plan for Kosovo represented "our most dangerous mission since the end of the Second World War".

In an interview with *The Times*, the minister said that the perils would be far greater than in Bosnia and that German troops were being given an extra five weeks of training to prepare themselves. Some 28,000 soldiers are to take

Bonn Defence Minister tells Roger Boyes about risks of sending troops to Kosovo

part in the multinational Nato-led force.

British troops are already in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the final contingent is likely to comprise 8,400 British and 5,500 German soldiers. The Kosovo deployment marks a histor-

ical breakthrough for Germany. Only after years of debate did it accept the idea of sending ground troops to Bosnia. That German contingent comprised mainly medical, transport and signals staff. Kosovo is different. Heavy armour, including German Leopard and British

Challenger tanks, will be moving in. Herr Schärling, who arrives in London on Monday for talks with his counterpart, George Robertson, says that the Nato mission in Kosovo will have three components: to protect the 1,300 unarmed monitors sent by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe; to implement a Kosovo agreement; and to verify and launch operations from the air.

Herr Schärling refuses to define

the mission as military intervention but plainly force may be needed at each stage. The agreement will entail the disarming of the Kosovo Liberation Army, protecting disarmed ethnic Albanians and supervising the withdrawal of Serb units. All these activities are potential flashpoints.

The air operations are, in essence, Nato's big stick. The threat of bombardment is the only real source of pressure on President

Milosevic. "The experience of the past ten years is that Milosevic caves in only at the very last moment, so we need credible and intensive pressure," Herr Schärling said. German troops could expect to stay in place "for the duration of an agreement, at least three years".

It is a measure of the changes in Germany that he could speak so openly about deploying troops. Last week he gained parliamentary approval for a Kosovo mission,

while the goal of the operation, which he defines as "avoiding new mountains of corpses and new waves of refugees", seems to be understood by ordinary Germans.

The only protests are likely to come from rank and file Greens, but they have never been so out of tune with the national mood. Germany has turned away from its modern pacifist tradition and its instinct to draw into a shell when called upon to act.

Chirac's family falls out over women MPs

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

PRESIDENT Chirac received an unusual and embarrassing put-down yesterday when his wife, Bernadette, publicly contradicted him over plans to feminise the French parliament.

In an interview, the famously long-suffering Mme Chirac broke her traditional silence to oppose a government-sponsored proposal to impose quotas for women MPs. Her comments also amounted to an attack on her daughter, Claude.

M Chirac's closest political adviser — and on the Prime Minister's wife, Sylviane Agacinski, the brains behind the project. It was Mme Agacinski who convinced her Socialist husband, Lionel Jospin, to promote the so-called parity legislation. And it was

Mme Chirac who persuaded her centre-right father that he too had to support the project.

But the President's wife told *Le Figaro* yesterday: "I cannot accept the idea." Mme Chirac rubbed salt into the heart of state's wounds by describing him as a macho man with "a certain taste for provoking" women.

The implication is that his backing is a hypocritical manoeuvre to improve his standing with younger voters.

The interview was all the more surprising since Mme Chirac has portrayed herself as a loyal housewife who looks after her husband and "has a strict duty" to avoid public pronouncements. But it may signal the start of a political offensive from a woman whose de-

more public persona is far removed from the reality.

Mme Chirac is a councillor in the Corrèze region and yesterday she told the newspaper: "I have not abandoned hope of holding other positions." Her criticism of the legislation may be a thorn in the presidential side, but it is an astute personal move that will win her support among the centre-right electorate.

Many conservative voters are appalled at the Bill to promote the "equal access of men and women to public office". Although just 59 of France's 577 MPs are women, one of the lowest percentages in Europe, rightwingers want to encourage, rather than impose, change.

They say the Government's legislation will reduce voter choice. This view is backed by followers of the feminist icon, Simone de Beauvoir, who fear women MPs will become a category apart selected for their gender and not their talents. But Mme Agacinski believes legislation is the only means of reforming France's notoriously macho public life. Her husband and his left-wing Cabinet seem to have been given little choice except to agree.

If M Chirac had listened to his instincts, he would have blocked the parity Bill. But he listened to his daughter, who told him he would appear old-fashioned unless he threw his weight behind it.

French justice has been

ROLAND DUMAS, France's highest judge and former Foreign Minister, was yesterday dumped in a legal minefield by his ex-mistress in connection with an inquiry into alleged bribery at the heart of French public life.

Christine Deviers-Joncour told a judge she had bought M Dumas 12 Ancient Greek statues worth a total of Fr264,000 (£27,500) with money supplied by Elf-Aquitaine, the oil company. Her claim that M Dumas knew the origin of the funds places him at the centre of allegations that Elf tried to buy government decisions in its favour.

In an interview published in *Paris-Match* yesterday, Mme Deviers-Joncour made plain her intention to abandon the president of the French Supreme Court to his own fate. Having shielded M Dumas for two years, she now accuses him of lying.

French justice has been

looking into claims that Elf gave millions of francs to Mme Deviers-Joncour in the hope she would influence M Dumas, with whom she had an affair in the early 1990s.

At one stage Mme Deviers-Joncour was remanded in custody for five months when it emerged that she had received a Fr59 million commission from Elf after the Government approved the 1991 sale of warships to Taiwan.

But the inquiry was floundering, with no proof that the late President Mitterrand's Foreign Minister knew Elf was funding his mistress.

Until now. Yesterday Mme Deviers-Joncour said the former Foreign Minister had greatly admired the Greek statues that were on show on the day before an important auction in 1990.

On the morning of the sale,

Alfred Sirven, a director of

Elf, arrived at her house with an envelope containing Fr300,000, she claimed. "Buy what you want with this money and surprise me," said M Sirven, according to Mme Deviers-Joncour. She said M Dumas knew of M Sirven's visit and cash payment.

Yesterday M Dumas's lawyers acknowledged he received the gifts, but denied that he was aware of who paid for them.

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The secret is learning to
pull the right strings

Drawstring pants are back. And if you want to avoid looking like a puppet, loosen up and let them hang around your navel

There is a generation of women for whom mention of the word drawstring conjures a host of images, none of them compatible with high fashion. This is, roughly speaking, the generation that was reared on a television diet of *Andy Pandy* — that strange, androgynous puppet who jerked about dressed in a shapeless Pierrot costume fastened at the neck, wrist and ankle with stiff, drawstring-tied frills. The same generation tends to have been educated at schools where domestic science departments were run by brisk

strings vanished from my life, reappearing sporadically at the waistband of a delectable pair of lacy-knit babies' leggings, or in the oddly frivolous gathered ankles of soldiers' khakis. But suddenly my new *Vogue* falls open at a Miu Miu nylon skirt and top, gathered in elegant wrinkles on to a wholly delectable leather drawstring. Good gracious. Evidently it is time for me to get out my little gold safety pin again.

I didn't think that it was going to be easy. Drawstrings would be all very well if it were not for all the gathering involved. Bad enough when one is talking about some kind of long, trailing, romantic skirt. But as for drawstring trousers — well, if there is a better way of adding six inches to one's waist and behind, I have not yet discovered it. In fact, the more I think about drawstring trousers, the more rebellious I feel. Perhaps, like those huge, flat Mary Jane shoes with the strap across the

thickest part of the instep, this may have to be one fashion to which I refuse to fall victim. Then, on my quest for a comfortable and elegant working wardrobe, I found myself trying on, more from a sense of duty than with any enthusiasm, a couple of pairs of drawstring trousers, one in navy canvas by Armani, and another in sand-coloured polyester by Donna Karan, and a kind of conversion took place. My error, it appears, has been to tie the string too tight, lashing it at the waist as though I expected a force nine gale to blow up. Hence the unflattering bunching effect fore and aft.

Now, said the sympathetic clothes consultant who had taken me in hand, if I were to loosen the string a little, so that the waistline fell in a gentle curve just below navel level, I would see a startling improvement. She was right. My Dorina Karan strides, which — as I had been wearing them — suggested an unfortunate misalliance between Field Marshal Montgomery and Mrs Arabella Bloomer, slunk down towards my hipbones. Worn with Warehouse's shoulder-buttoned khaki rib T-shirt with a little buttoned pocket on the upper arm, the effect was of a sexy deserter from some hitherto unknown female offshoot of the French Foreign Legion.

You can guess the rest. The spectre of Andy Pandy has been banished and I simply can't understand how I put up for so long with the tight, unyielding denim waistband of my jeans cutting into my tender midriff. I am probably too mean to buy drawstrings from Armani or Prada, but there are plenty of alternatives. At French Connection there is a good version of the military Donna Karan look, in sand or black cotton with reinforced knees. Velcro-fastening pockets and ties at waist and ankle. A techno style in sheeny charcoal cotton and nylon with leg pockets and a stitched front seam is £70; soft, draping rayon and viscose pants in black

A high-contrast, black and white portrait of a man. He has dark hair and a well-groomed mustache. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt and a patterned tie. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on his face and hands, and deep shadows on the rest of his body. The background is dark and indistinct. The entire portrait is enclosed within a thick black rectangular border.

Strings attached: "How did I put up with unyielding denim waistbands for so long?"

hite or sky blue are £45; plain linen wide-leg pants are £55 (a matching drawstring jacket with a pouch pocket is £10); and, for the urban peasant, French Connection has wide pants with a buttoo fly and a drawstring waist in an extraordinary, but quite attractive, sort of gold-brown sack-ing for £45.

or black polyamide (£45). Khaki cotton drawstring fatigues are £38. And at Warehouse, Andy Pandy's rebellious teenage offspring can find acres of drawstring pants at pocket-money prices, of which the most striking are probably the cropped fatigues, £28, and the polyester-mix pants in pale grey, black or air-force blue, with toggle ties at

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Bring on the rivals, I'm fighting for a spoil

I have discovered a lifetime of betrayal by my husband of 32 years

Lynn Redgrave is in crisis. In an interview with Janie Lawrence she tells for the first time why she is divorcing her husband

We have been talking for 35 minutes before it becomes apparent that all is not well with Lynn Redgrave. Until this point she has given a bravura performance perfectly befitting one of our most accomplished actresses: poised, sanguine, and recounting anecdotes with considerable brio.

I am the last in a series of journalists interviewing her about her new (and very fine) film, *Gods and Monsters*, for which she has been nominated for an Oscar. And if she doesn't win one for the film, she certainly deserves one for the performance she managed to maintain almost, but not quite, until the end of her grueling publicity schedule on Tuesday afternoon.

The straw that breaks her is my innocent and well-intentioned remark that finally she appears to have it all — professional acclamation, and a marriage (to John Clark, the child star of *Just William*) which, in the fusty world of Hollywood, has gone on for ever: 32 years, to be precise.

"Yes, it's been a very long one," she replies, in measured tones distinctly lacking in enthusiasm. For a few minutes she continues to talk about her career before volunteering, in an apparent *non sequitur*, that she has been undergoing therapy since December.

"That would normally indicate someone in crisis," I say, puzzled. "As a matter of fact, I am in crisis," she replies. Her voice is steady but her fingers twiddle agitatedly with a nap-

Jack Straw, Robin Cook, Frank Dobson, Alastair Campbell — these are some of the truly inspiring names of our age, names that have the power to pull all of us to reassess our lives and to wonder if maybe it isn't time to emigrate.

But what is it that makes them so unsatisfying? It's their ersatz quality. They're not the Real McCoy. They are the political world's version of the newspaper spoiler.

Spoliors are a newspaper's way of stealing a rival's clothes when it fears its own wardrobe might look wanting: for example, this week, to tarnish *The Mirror's* scoop serialization of Andrew Morton's new book on Monica Lewinsky, its rivals have done nothing to discourage their readers from believing that it is they who have secured Lewinsky's story.

On Wednesday *The Sun's* front

page carried a picture of Lewinsky next to the promise: "We've got the FIRST interview." *The Mirror*, which began its serialization only yesterday, has been so anxious that it has been running anti-spoiler spinners of its own all week, from covers suggesting that its inside pages contained extracts from Morton's book when, in fact, they contained only articles about the background to the book.

In a similar saga last week, *The Daily Telegraph*, published extracts from Germaine Greer's sequel to *The Female Eunuch*, which revealed that after 30 years of campaigning for feminist ideals, Greer is, astonishingly, still a woman. But *Daily Mail* readers must have been baffled by the *Telegraph* crowing about its exclusive, because their own paper was telling them how "In the first of a compelling new series today we reveal the sexu-

al forces that shaped one of the century's most extraordinary thinkers". What the *Daily Mail* was in fact publishing were extracts from an old, unauthorised biography of Greer by Christine Wallace.

But whereas newspaper spoliors are criticised outside Fleet Street by people who think that they tell you everything you need to know about the jackdaw morality of journalists, the human political spoiler is actually running the country.

The human political spoiler goes to sit at Tony Blair's Cabinet table. He's given a Whiteman's ministry to run; civil servants who will take the blame when their boss should have read an important report but didn't; and flights on Concorde. When it comes to running spoliors, politicians are the experts.

New Labour, we can now see, was nothing more than a spoiler designed to imitate the Tories and

thereby seduce voters into switching allegiance. Tony Blair has diligently stolen every idea the Tories had, a task obviously made easier by the fact that the Tories didn't have many. As far as the Thatcherite creed of "One of Us" goes, Blair is more royalist than the king.

Having bagged the last election, Blair continues to deploy spoiler tactics. Worried that a more electable Tory might unseat William Hague as Tory leader, Blair has activated a spoiling campaign by appointing Hague's likely rivals to run task forces thus taunting them as new Labour sympathisers. Chris Patten has been co-opted to review the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Michael Heseltine is helping the Government to promote Anglo-Chinese trade. Lord Wakeham, the former Conservative leader in

the Lords, is to supervise a Royal Commission into the future of the Upper House.

The spoiler that makes new Labour tingle is, of course, Kenneth Clarke (Blair: "Why isn't Ken in our Cabinet?" Campbell: "He's a Tory, but Hague says he'll kick him out if he backs pro-single currency rebels in this summer's Euro-elections"). Blair: "Super! Then we can make him Deputy PM".

Most of new Labour's First XI are human political spoliors, too. Robin Cook successfully makes even emptier threats to despoil in the world's trouble-spots than did his predecessor as Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind. Jack Straw — mimicking the Tories' Home Secretary Michael Howard — is also a smart, often eloquent politician who has a knack of coming across as a complete plonker. At Health, Frank Dobson sets the

world alight just as dimly as Stephen Dorrell did before him. At

the Department of Trade, Blair has found a perfect spoiler for the unmemorable Ian Lang in the forgettable Stephen Byers.

Spoliers are everywhere. High

street clothes shops do it by copy-

ing designer's frocks while they

are still on the catwalks in Milan

and Paris and getting them into

the shops almost overnight. I had

planned to write today about the

euro. Then I learned that a colum-

nist in a rival newspaper was going

to write about spoliors. So my jour-

nalistic instinct told me that it was

professional duty to spoil his col-

um with spoliors.

If, by some unfortunate chance,

you should read another article in

another newspaper today that

shamelessly sets out to spoil my

spoliors about spoliors, don't tell

me. I'll spoil my whole day.



In crisis: "People will say hooray for Lynn, but there is a price to pay. You can have your life as you knew it destroyed"

with a woman called Nicolette, and that during the affair she had become pregnant by him. The affair ended and subsequently Nicolette fell in love with, and married, Lynn and John's own son, Ben, who, not knowing who Zachary's real father was, adopted him as his own.

He said he had had an affair

for eight years," says Lynn, her voice hollow with the shock of it still. "I thought this child was my surrogate grandchild; that his own father was a s*** and never paid attention to him."

It is unlikely that any of this would have become public were it not for the fact that last year Nicolette filed a restraining order against Clark, who she alleged was harassing her.

By this time her marriage to Ben had broken up, and she was involved with a married plumber. Lynn says that her husband was forced finally to confess to her because of the alleged harassment. Nicolette, in an apparent attempt to stop him, was threatening to tell Lynn about Zachary.

"He's harassed them in the most appalling way and she threatened to tell me if he didn't stop. So he told me, but then he carried on. Because he can't have her, he doesn't want anyone else to have her."

It was Thanksgiving, the traditional day in America for family unity, when her hus-

band turned Lynn's own family inside out. "It's quite, quite horrifying," she says. "I'd just put the turkey in the oven. We had a houseguest, and John said he had something to tell me. We went into the garden and he told me about Zachary."

Her immediate reaction, she says, was to feel compassion for Zachary. She recounts the betrayal without anger or rancour; it is as if she is still in such a deep state of shock that she can scarcely believe the words she is uttering. "I'm not bitter. I'm a lot of things, but I don't have time for that. I've been in a terrible state of struggle, and gradually making moves towards taking control of the situation. And with each step I take, as hard as it is, I feel a little clearer."

Many times over the past three months, she has been driving and had to pull over because she simply couldn't see the road. "Quite honestly, I was unable to drive at all on the freeway for a month."

For a long time she was unable to eat, and has lost ten pounds in less than eight weeks. "I've eaten better because I'm away, but it's probably the first time I've eaten

fallers. "And yet . . ." Her eyes well up again.

One dreadful irony is that her husband is also her manager. Since her performance in *Shine* she has gone from strength to strength; she is marvellous in *Gods and Monsters* and with the Oscars only weeks away, he would, under normal circumstances, be accompanying her. Now she intends to go with her daughters. "The bitter sweetness is that he has been a great champion of my work, and long wanted me to succeed. All that's happened has been to re-

invent me to share in. But how can I? So I can only say: 'Well, I'm still here and I'll go on for my kids.'

"I suppose what I'm thinking is that the Greek gods who look over us from Mount Olympus are saying: 'Well, we've decided that you've worked very hard as an actor, you've paid your dues and you've lived a good life. People will say, hooray for Lynn, she's back, but there's a price to pay. And this is the price. You can have your life as you knew it destroyed.'

Unsurprisingly, she has barely given her future any thought. "This has been a mas-

I had just put the turkey in the oven. We had a guest, and John said he had something to tell me. Something to tell me. We went into the garden and he told me about Zachary

properly in three months."

Her husband has stated that until she filed for divorce on Monday, he had been hoping they would be able to "patch things up". This seems a remarkable comment from a man who has revealed his story to America's most notorious (and high-paying) tabloid. Yet women have forgiven errant husbands, in the most extraordinary of circumstances, before; does Lynn share his hope of reconciliation?

"It's too soon for me to say. I can't forgive him and go back to him. There is no way we can be back together." It was her husband's decision to tell all to the *National Enquirer*, she says, that jolted her into filing for divorce. "He didn't dream that I would do it. But once he spoke out, I had to. I didn't want my action to be the result of an article. There's no wavering on my part." She adds, ominously: "This is only the tip of the iceberg. And how huge is this? The rest of it is horrifying."

She won't be drawn further as to what "the rest of it" is. On the basis of what we know so far, it hardly bears contemplating. And, inevitably, one of the most painful elements for her is having to wonder whether her whole married life has been a sham.

"Yes, that's what I have to work through. And to tell myself what I believe is true: that he has loved me. He's loved me very deeply, I think." She

chunk of my life, so I have a long way to go before I can put this into perspective. I'm not afraid of being alone. I'm quite good at it. But then I have children and my daughter Kelly is expecting twins, so soon I'll have grandchildren. I've had very much of a wonderful life. Of course, my children have been very affected by all of this."

As for her attitude towards Zachary, she insists nothing will change. "He is the most wonderful child and I truly love him."

When we speak later on the phone, after the news story has broken, she says she is exhausted and keen to gather strength before she begins shooting a new film next week. "I think I am strong but I've been moved at how good my family have been. They've been fantastic. Until this, I've never confided in anyone apart from my husband for the whole of my married life."

She says she has categorically no intention of engaging in a public war of words with her husband, and states that she intends to maintain a dignified silence. Yet rarely a day goes by when she is not, at some point, overwhelmed by emotion. Her voice trembles. "In many ways my marriage wasn't perfect, but I loved him deeply. My heart rose when I heard his footfall in the kitchen."

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Why Britain will be in the money

We can only benefit from staying away from euroland

Whoever said that newspapers were remote from their readers? I was planning not to write about Europe again this week, but the deluge of e-mails and letters has persuaded me otherwise. It looks as if the position of being pro-European but anti-EMU is one that many of you share.

So why do critics claim that it is self-contradictory? Colin Sharman, of KPMG, dismissed it as like being "half-pregnant" when New Europe, the organisation with which I am involved, was launched on Monday. Passionate EMU-philes love setting up a false dichotomy: you either have to go with the flow or leave the EU altogether. That's as silly as saying that you can't love football but hate Arsenal.

But at least Mr Sharman will vote "yes" out of real enthusiasm. More worrying are the millions who have grave doubts about joining the euro but fear there is no future for this country outside it. The "yes" campaign will play mercilessly on these fears. It will claim that we "cannot afford" to be left behind.

So the onus is on opponents of EMU to boost people's confidence that Britain can thrive in the Union outside the eurozone. For we are not a pathetic little country that cannot survive without pooling economic management with the Germans and the French. Far from it.

Britain is the fifth largest economy in the world, it is one of only five permanent members of the UN Security Council and is a leading member of Nato and G7. None of these facts will change, in or out of EMU – except that, if we join, our G7 seat may go to a joint eurozone representative.

Would we lose inward investment if we stayed out? I very much doubt it: we may even gain it. Don't forget that we would remain in the single market. EMU-enthusiasts claim that the eurozone would rig the market against us. Not only would that be illegal, under the Treaty of Rome; it would also be wholly against the eurozone's interests, since we are their biggest trading partner and the balance of trade is in their favour.

Inward investors in Britain would have to hedge their currency exposure to the euro. But, offset against that tiny insurance premium would be the huge benefits of our labour flexibility, low tax and modest social costs, not to mention our language and reputation as a good place to live. A dynamic economy on the fringe of euroland could be a far more attractive site for investment than the often sclerotic and overtaxed countries within the zone. German companies are already moving their factories here. Deutsche Bank has just spent £300 million improving its international headquarters – in London, not Frankfurt.

Of course the pressures to raise our tax and social costs will come whether we join or not. But the chances of resisting them are greater if we remain outside. This is how it will happen. Endless proposals for "harmonisation" will come: each time (I hope)



Mary Ann Sieghart



It's dead wrong

We deplore the murderers of British tourists, but bomb Iraqis with impunity

This week, as we are all aware, a group of non-Europeans killed a group of Britons in a most brutal fashion. The story is still being given sensational coverage in the British media. Meanwhile a group of Britons have been killing non-Europeans in a most brutal fashion. That story has been ignored.

The killing of four Britons in Uganda, allegedly because of Britain's support for the Tutsi regime in Rwanda, was gashly and tragic. Travellers to turbulent parts of the world take a risk. British visitors have been killed in Yemen, in Chechnya and in South-East Asia. None received two, three, four pages of gruesome coverage, day after day. Rwanda and its borderland is the site of Africa's Cambodia, a bloodbath not yet over. The genocide is ignored by British and American interventionists largely because blacks are killing blacks, and doing so far from cameras and aircraft carriers. It is hard not to conclude that the attention given to this tragedy was because blacks killed whites, and with gruesome weapons, thus conforming to the stereotype of "barbaric" Africa.

Now for the unimportant killing. Britain is currently conducting a bombing campaign against Iraq in support of the War of Frustration. In December, British and American forces unleashed a rain of terror on Baghdad with the macho title of Desert Fox. This was a 72-hour burst of bombs and missiles, whose objectives were obscure. They were variously to "teach Saddam a lesson", to "disarm him from the air", to restore weapons inspections and possibly to end a coup. Afterwards, Tony Blair boasted "We have put Saddam back firmly in his cage and secured it". Washington agreed. Its justification for Desert Fox was to achieve what United Nations inspectors had failed to achieve: to neutralise President Saddam Hussein's offensive weapons. This had been done.

In which case what was the point of continuing with sanctions after December? The answer is that there was a wider war aim. Within weeks the bombing resumed. In the past two months, more bombs have fallen on Iraq than during Desert Fox. A wider list of targets has included vaguely defined "command and control" sites. Even assuming a pilot knows what he is aiming at, he cannot be sure of hitting it. The Pentagon recently



Simon Jenkins

done before: bring about the downfall of a regime. This reason cannot be declared because it is illegal. For better or worse, overthrowing the leader of a sovereign state by force runs counter to both the UN Charter and international law. So what we have here is, in reality, a private war against Iraq that neither London nor Washington can avoid. The nearest parallels are the operations by Presidents Nixon and Reagan against hostile governments in Chile, Nicaragua, Lebanon and Panama. Mostly they used mercenaries. Britain is using the RAF.

In which case, cries a modern Palmerston, at least let it work. But how? This is a war without any plan, any tactic, any strategy or any foreseeable victory. It is mere bombing. Toppling Saddam Hussein would plainly require a ground assault. Britain has neither the will nor the guts for that. If Anglo-American forces invaded, against the opposition of half the world, they would have to fight and to stay. As in Bosnia and presumably in Kosovo, they would have to take responsibility for the aftermath. They would need to be proper policemen, rather the present hit-and-run vendetta squad.

The British Government lacks the courage of its convictions in this venture. It is pursuing low-cost, low-risk machismo. It is doing something relatively easy, but obscenely cruel, to avoid having to do something hard but sensible. This would be to admit that a decade of anti-Saddam strategy has failed and sanctions should end. Bombing and sanctions have merely entrenched him, and worsened the impoverishment of his people. British ministers keep saying they have no quarrel with the Iraqi people, only with Saddam. Not so. There are two quarrels. One is with Saddam, which he is winning. The other is with the Iraqi people, which they are losing. They are the ones Britain is bombing.

The present British Cabinet and Parliamentary Labour Party are largely composed of one-time anti-war protesters. A general once told me that whenever he saw ban-the-bombers on the march his instinct was to run for cover. He was right. But I never thought the marchers would end up dropping the bombs.

comment@the-times.co.uk

'Asterix in euroland: featuring the Magister Primus, Tony Preposterus, and his noisy henchman Bill Cashnametapefix'

Philip Howard



N ow is the time for Asterix and Obelix to visit euroland. Those anarchic cartoon Gauls have deconstructed and taken the piss out of most other human pomposities in their struggles with J. Caesar and his original Treaty of Rome. With a Falstaffian majesty they refuse to take at all seriously all persons, powers and institutions that take themselves seriously. Participants in the euro debate are ripe for their attention.

So on his next quest Asterix should revisit his cousins in Britannia Magna, where the debate rages hottest. The very names lend themselves to his punning art, from Eurosceptic Chief Druid of the Compah-pah Sept which worships the late defunct Jimmy Aufix, to Euromania, the high priestess of the confederation led from the rear by various bashful Latin lovers. These include the Magister

Primus, Tony Preposterus of the cheesy curate's smile, and his Magister Secundus, Guru of Darkness, Petrus Mandefilius. There Asterix and Obelix will meet Bill Cashnametapefix Verobiluminous, whose oratory can empty the Senate of senators and a newspaper page of its readers faster than any other campaigner, except, perhaps, for Ted Campus (Heath) of the Europhilix Clan. Winsome Teresa Gormania shall carry a spear, entirely for her own census honorum rather than any tribal cause, and so will Antidix Hastings, scribe for Conadox Nigerrimus. Another scribe for Nigerrimus, Christopher Liberter, will each week publish a horror story about some imaginary petytoggling regulations emanating from the great lawmaking convention under the Brussels Sprout. And the following week somebody who knows

anything about it will write to point out that he has got all his facts wrong, as per usual. Panacea Impedimenta will swing her handbag again at filthy froggy foreign fiends, as she once did beside her sister Boadicea. And Geratrix Tebbitix, the grumpy old man of her, will snarl and gibber such threats as shall be the terrors of the earth, could anyone still be bothered to listen to or understand him.

As usual for Asterix, we shall have a pictorial pun, perhaps from Rubens's painting of Zeus visiting Danac in a ticker-tape shower of eurobonds. And there must be a literary reference, possibly to Doctor Debens Owning, leader of the neweurope sect

of opportunist kerns and galloglasses. "Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong" is everything by starts, and nothing long.

There will be capuchonix pax of dogs of a snappy Russell nature, as is suitable in Britannica, all called Idifix and Dogmatix. The tribal prophet will

be Vitalistatix Prolix Worcester-sawy Morpolis. His Sphix will produce, for a suitably large emolumentum in membris from Stonehenge, the answer anybody wants by rephrasing the question craftily. For example: "Do you want your feudal levies in euro membris decided by Attila de Lors in Frankfurt, or by Unionjux Sendervictorius and Appianglorius, your tribal chief-

tains at Westminster?" An economist, called Hypothecis Vainglorius, will expound uninterpretable runes about Endogenous Variable Growth Economix, and crowds of assorted voters and nutters, with such names as Hisloricus, Tragicomix, Homeopathix and Soplixtix will demonstrate, screeching: "Serva nos-tram libram. Save our pound."

T o conform to the Asterix consilium, there will be some Gadus (cod) pedagogy, about how the pound sterling has developed from older tribal totems such as angels, guineas, florins and, as it happens, the first euro coinage, the libra. And the curious route by which the mighty dollar sprang out of the "large groats" coined by an obscure Bohemian Count in a dim Bohemian village in 1518, and crossed the Atlantic by way of James VI's sword dollars in

Scotland, and Spanish pieces of eight. Chancellor Odiuscomparis will declare in his Budget that money like membris has only two properties: it should be flat so that it can be piled up. And it should be round, or oblong, so that it can circulate. There will be a Virgilian tag, remembered from Old Chalky, *librae sacra fames*, perhaps. The absurd hunger for the pound.

As usual, the whole loony mess will have to be resolved by a magic potion, brewed at the Kipa of Anglia by Eddie Getafix. For the British euromutters the ingredients should be *box os (beef on the bone), boiled cabbage soaked in mint sauce, genetically modified chips with vinegar, weak tea and warm beer*. And the Asterix book will be more illuminating and edifying than most of the propaganda put out by the fissionary and endearing tribes of Ancient Britain.



Loose cannon

AS MONICA LEWINSKY lies over here with her amorous tale, Major James Hewitt is heading over there to give a lecture tour about his friendship with the late Diana, Princess of Wales.

The major, a lovely rat really, says he is poised to follow Baroness Thatcher, John Major and the writer, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, where he could earn as much as £30,000 a chat. For as the great novelist says: "I gave a lecture in Palm Beach yesterday and half the questions were about Diana."

"If Archer can do it, anyone can," Hewitt claims. Talking about the Princess is "painful" but he admits that if he were to give a lecture series "it is an aspect of my life one would have to touch upon".

MADONNA'S affection for Britain extends to our floors: she has bought a £50,000 pure British carpet to line her daughter's nursery. The singer commissioned 160 square metres for young Lourdes from Heckendubbe Carpets in Yorkshire. A big bedroom, that, for a little girl.

DIANE ABBOTT claims wildly in the House, amid stilled choruses, that a hack had rung her to say the Foreign Office has "an arsenal of personal information" to use against her. Perhaps she meant me. I rang to relay a harmless little story about the time she played opposite Michael Portillo in a school play. She seemed to construe this as an FO plot to bring her down. You must get out more, Diane.

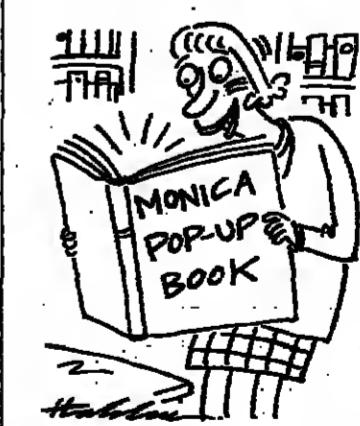


THE saucer-eyed Sophie Dahl, granddaughter of Roald (both above), is to venture to India to ease her writer's block. The orb of modelling tells me she is tired of London and dreams of escape to a mobile-free mecca. "I have been trying to write for ages," she says. "All my student friends do the travelling thing, but I missed out because I work so hard."

WILLIAM HAGUE has had an idea. Or three, to be fair. The Tory leader, I hear, has devised themes to push in a summer offensive.

The first: the British have not changed (they still hate social security fraud, paying tax, etc). The second: the Tories should be the "new Whigs". This requires the Tories "to tell a story of progress". As well as contradicting theme one, this seems to sit a little oddly with, well, Conservatism. Theme three (ah, that familiar glow): freedom. Back to the brain vat, William.

SHOOTING rather than the Liberal Democratic leadership is exercising the splendid Menzies Campbell. As the 45 potential candidates met, some expressed concern about disclosing the result on August 9. "Whatever is the problem?" plopped up Ming. "It's better than August 12."



IN HIS effort to flog the Millennium Dome, Lord Falconer of Thoroton is toying with a classic ploy favoured by property developers. The clutch one is poised to make the Greenwich erection a sexier buy by cleverly redefining it as a company rather than an asset. Thus, a purchaser would pay stamp duty of 0.5 per cent, incurred on share sales, rather than 3 per cent, which falls due on asset disposals. The only loser? You.

THE Queen's distaste for dreary repetition fills me with admiration. Sent a rare invitation from the Royal Opera House to see The Marriage of Figaro, she politely sent her regrets because she had already seen it — remembering it as the one about the girl losing a pin.

JASPER GERARD



BLAIR'S BANANA SKIN

What a ridiculous way to duck the blame for a trade blunder

Tony Blair greatly admires the free-trading, modernising socialism of the Dutch. Had his ministers listened to The Netherlands last year, Scotland's cashmere industry would not now be facing ruin for the sake of an outlawed EU scheme to shield Caribbean banana-growers from competition. Nor would his backbench troops be following his irresponsibly populist lead as they bay for the blood of wicked multinationals with all the unconstructed fervour of old Labour. Nor would Britain be courting American contempt by summoning the US Ambassador for a carpeting by the Trade Secretary, Stephen Byers, over a trade dispute where the EU, and Britain, have repeatedly been found by an impartial global panel to be legally in the wrong. Robin Cook, never one to avoid digging when the hole yawns, is apparently to repeat this foolish performance today.

What ails this Government, that it should resort to so public a drubbing of its closest ally, with a dénouement that, even when she was at her angriest over the US invasion of Grenada, Margaret Thatcher had more sense of decorum and proportion than to contemplate? Is it the Scottish elections that make Mr Blair, there on a visit, pour forth oaths about "our determination to make sure British jobs and Scottish jobs are protected"? Or does this posturing conceal private embarrassment that Britain, this great free-trading nation, shares with the European Commission much of the blame for this stupid crisis?

Britain chaired the EU council which last year, after the EU's banana regime had thrice been condemned by an impartial panel of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as a breach of global trade rules, decided to substitute one trade-distorting regime for banana imports with another. The Dutch, with Denmark, voted against, rightly arguing that the US had won its case and it was time for the EU to obey the agreed laws governing global trade.

Sir Leon Brittan's letter on this page

denies that the EU has dragged its feet. Why then did it ignore the first ruling against it, back in 1994? Why, after the US had won for a third time, did it wait more than 12 months before changing the banana regime — and attempt, even then, to stiffer past the rules rather than respect them? Sir Leon is too battle-hardened a veteran of transatlantic trade negotiations not to have known that the Americans, who have been waiting half a decade for action, would not be so easily fobbed off.

The irresistible conclusion is that he has filibustered, knowing that if the EU tinkered with a quota or two, it could then demand that Washington go back to the WTO and fight the battle all over again.

On Sir Leon's own admission, the EU is still refusing to discuss with the US "the substance of the new regime" — a regime whose whole purpose is discriminatory.

The US has been criticised in the past on this page for using its muscle rather than playing by the rules; but in this case, after sitting for six years like patient on a monument, it is hardly surprising that it is no longer smiling on the grief the EU persists in causing the world trade system. Rules, unlike bananas, may not be bent, if global trade is to thrive. The Government has known since at least last November about America's March deadline for exacting compensation for losses suffered by America's banana distributors — time enough to ensure that the axe did not fall.

It is quite true that the US has no legal right to impose sanctions until yet another WTO panel has decided how much compensation is appropriate; but it has not, technically, done so; customs bonds must be posted, but will not be collected until the WTO reports. If Mr Blair objects to legalistic games, he should not have joined Brussels in playing them. Makers of cashmere, batteries or biscuits are right to be disgusted. But it is British ministers — not evil US multinationals — that they should blame for their undeserved plight.

SENATOR CLINTON

Republicans want the First Lady to fight in New York

While the United States and much of the wider world awaited the words of the Latest Lover, the First Lady has spent the past two days in New York dropping hints that she may seek election to the Senate. Hillary Clinton's speech there on Wednesday in which she said that "we cannot drop out of the political process" was deliberately teasing. If she stands, her opponent will almost certainly be Rudolph Giuliani, the Republican Mayor of New York City.

This would be a bitter and expensive battle. Mrs Clinton starts with strong poll ratings and undoubted celebrity. But she has never sought elected office before and is notoriously thin-skinned in her media dealings. Mr Giuliani has already raised her public support for a Palestinian state as an issue that might alienate Jewish voters. This may prove less of a difficulty if Binyamin Netanyahu loses the forthcoming Israeli election and is replaced by a politician willing to surrender more territory to Yasser Arafat. It is, however, an indication of what Mrs Clinton will face if she chooses to accept the Senate challenge.

Her biggest liability would be her status as an outsider. Born in Illinois, educated in Connecticut, resident of Arkansas, currently established in Washington, she has only slender connections with the Empire State. This may not matter much in Manhattan or even the rest of New York City where many voters are themselves recent immigrants. It takes more than a (Greenwich) village, however, to be elected across the whole of New York State. In cities such as Albany, Buffalo and Syracuse, Mrs Clinton's lack of local knowledge will matter.

OLD CURIOSITY SHOP

Parliament opens its chambers to tourism

Roll up, roll up. Tickets for London's longest-running show. Enter the Chambers, if you dare. The Palace of Westminster is throwing open its doors. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. This tour is not for the faint-hearted. Prepare yourself for the ill-mannered display. Two Members "did both come drunk the other day into the House, and did both speak for half an hour" wrote Samuel Pepys. And on this spot Michael Heseltine swung the Mace, mane blowing in the political tempest.

But the most heinous crimes are reserved for elsewhere, out of the public gaze. Stay close together now and follow me. There are five kilometres of corridor in which to connive. Let us begin here, behind the Speaker's Chair, where members sit for secret words and juniors are whipped into party line.

Moving on swiftly we reach Plots' Bar. In watering holes like these careers have sunk while rebellions bubbled. But come deeper down into the bowels of the building to witness the scene of the most secret assignations. Here in the rifle gallery, MPs lead their researchers on. But when their investigations surface again, the revelation may lead to the end of many a career.

Now we are standing in the Commons chamber. Note the red lines: two sword lengths apart — just far enough to separate fractious Members. But still, they failed to stop MPs from exchanging more than verbal blows. Emmanuel Shinwell once hit a Tory here so hard that the man's ears rang for the rest of his life. He may have been among the many who resorted to drink to quell their nerves. Even Disraeli quaffed brandy and water. Gladstone

preferred sherry and egg. But more sober Members may resort to snuff provided there in a box behind the Speaker's Chair.

Here we are at the scene of many an ill-mannered display. Two Members "did both come drunk the other day into the House, and did both speak for half an hour" wrote Samuel Pepys. And on this spot Michael Heseltine swung the Mace, mane blowing in the political tempest.

But the most heinous crimes are reserved for elsewhere, out of the public gaze. Stay close together now and follow me. There are five kilometres of corridor in which to connive. Let us begin here, behind the Speaker's Chair, where members sit for secret words and juniors are whipped into party line.

Moving on swiftly we reach Plots' Bar. In watering holes like these careers have sunk while rebellions bubbled. But come deeper down into the bowels of the building to witness the scene of the most secret assignations. Here in the rifle gallery, MPs lead their researchers on. But when their investigations surface again, the revelation may lead to the end of many a career.

And now we have reached the souvenir shop. Humbugs aplenty, and these are not the only mugs in the House of Commons. Once you could only buy politicians in Parliament. Now there are more tacky trinkets of the tourist trade. Anyone fancy an embossed brown envelope?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

US 'flying in face' of banana ruling

From Sir Leon Brittan, Vice-President of the European Commission

Sir, You are quite wrong to blame EU "footdragging" for our dispute with the US over banana imports (leading article, March 4).

A number of EU member states, especially Britain, have for many years favoured giving preferential access to Caribbean and African bananas to the EU market. Some of those Caribbean economies depend on bananas for up to 25 per cent of their income. Member states approved an amended banana regime last June, maintaining longstanding preferential access for African and Caribbean bananas, but responding to a World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling which had condemned some aspects of our earlier regime.

The US does not like the new regime. They have every right to challenge it again and achieve a final verdict in the WTO. But they have chosen not to do so. Instead, they have unilaterally determined that the new regime is not in compliance with international rules — something which is explicitly forbidden under their WTO obligations.

What the US announced yesterday is not, contrary to their claims, a suspension of sanctions action. It is an illegal measure designed to have immediate negative effects on European exports. The American Government's briefing notes for us with the press confirm this. They explicitly state that "we retaliated by effectively stopping trade as of March 3".

Their claim that they are obliged to act now in order to preserve their WTO rights is unfounded. It was expressly refuted by the WTO arbitrators on March 2, as was the figure for damages the Americans are claiming.

The US is flying in the face of the WTO, an organisation which the EU and the US worked hard to establish and from which we both benefit. The US has taken and won more dispute settlement panels than any other nation. But now they are resorting to the sort of unilateralism which we have been struggling for years to resist.

As for the Commission's role, we have been seeking a settlement and have been ready to address with the Americans the substance of the regime, but not under the duress of threatened unilateral action. Some weeks ago I recommended to EU member states that we should have discussions with the Americans. Many were in favour. Others, including the United Kingdom, were reluctant to agree, although I am happy to note that the British position has since developed and talks have been taking place.

I shall continue to work for a settlement, as I have worked with some success to settle other disputes caused by sanctions-happy American policy. Yours etc,

LEON BRITTON,
Vice-President,
European Commission,
Rue de la Loi 200,
B-1049 Brussels.
March 4.

Breastfeeding problems

From Mrs Alison Watts

Sir, I was sad to read of the traumatic experience of the baby Jessica and her parents in "Breast is not always best" (Weekend, February 27). Beatrice Clark has an understandably negative view of breastfeeding. In this instance it seems that breastfeeding was not properly established, but normally a woman's midwife would pick up any early signs of a problem and help to put things right.

Formula feeding, not breastfeeding, is regarded as normal in the UK and this culture is absorbed from childhood onwards. The National Childbirth Trust campaigns to help overcome the obstacles women experience and raise awareness of the health benefits of breastfeeding.

While our objective is a breastfeeding-friendly culture, our counsellors are committed to meeting parents' individual needs, which include supporting mothers who are switching from the breast to a bottle.

Yours sincerely,
ALISON WATTS (Chair,
Breastfeeding Promotion Group),
The National Childbirth Trust,
Alexandra House,
Oldham Terrace, Acton, W3 6NH.
March 4.

What a pane

From Mrs Leonie J. Hill

Sir, As a Southwark Council taxpayer, I am mightily interested in who will foot the window-cleaning bills incurred by Sir Norman Foster's tawdry "glass egg" planned for the South Bank (report and picture, February 20).

Yours faithfully,
LEONIE J. HILL,
6 Hampton Court,
King & Queen Wharf,
Rotherhithe Street, SE16 1SU.
February 26.

Letters to the Editor for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046 — or by e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

State responsibility towards caring for the elderly

From The Chair of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care for the Elderly

Sir, Your leading article, "Care free" (March 2) starts from a fundamental misconception of this commission's findings. These are not based on "old Labour instincts to trust the State". Rather we set out what we believe is the most cost-effective solution for the nation as a whole of making provision for people who need care.

We set out a new form of partnership between State and individual — one that has a cost simply because the current system places too much of a burden on the individual who is in need of care. It introduces an amount of risk-sharing which is currently lacking.

We acknowledge the uncertainty of future governments' intentions — that is why we suggest setting up a National Care Commission.

Your conclusion that the private sector — presumably insurance — should take the burden has been extensively addressed in our report. We point out how insurance will not deliver the goods. This is not just a theoretical position — all we have to do is to look at where it has been extensively marketed — in the United States. There, despite huge state subsidies, policies simply do not sell.

However, with the new form of partnership that the commission proposes, the industry will be able to design affordable products to cover the non-personal care for which the individual is responsible.

Yours sincerely,
STEWART SUTHERLAND,
Chair, Royal Commission on
Long Term Care for the Elderly,
Hanham House, 5th Floor,
Elephant & Castle, SE1 6TE.
March 2.

From the Group Director of Life and Pensions at Norwich Union

Sir, The royal commission's report on long-term care makes a number of extremely valuable recommendations. On funding, however, it is less practical.

The funding proposals must be judged in the light of political realities.

Yours sincerely,
PHILIP G. SCOTT,
Group Director, Life and Pensions,
Norwich Union,
PO Box 48, 25-27 Surrey Street,
Norwich NR1 3TA.
March 3.

From Mr Peter Orr

Sir, Your leader comments sensibly and with restraint on the recommendations by the royal commission, but distances itself from the plight of those who, near to or past retirement age, can hope to "save or insure for the future".

The present arrangements for care of the elderly and, in particular, those suffering from Alzheimer's disease can, in certain cases, prove harsh and punitive. Urgently needed now is some sort of transitional scheme to care for people who today can no

longer care for themselves. Those enjoying youth and middle age can read the warning signs and take appropriate action.

It would require only gentle tweaking of fiscal policy to accommodate the royal commission's recommendations on an *ad hoc* basis, and provide immediate assistance for those now too old, too feeble, too helpless to fend for themselves. This, surely, is a debt of honour which should be discharged without hesitation.

Yours faithfully,
PETER ORR,
17 Berkley Drive,
Guisborough, Cleveland TS14 7LX.
March 2.

From Mrs Valerie Townsend

Sir, It is incorrect to say (report, February 27) that the State meets the full cost of elderly care if savings fall below £10,000.

Local county councils decide an "expect to pay" level which bears little relation to the real cost of quality care. In this county the level is currently £241 per week (£141 per hour) for the total physical and social residential care of a very dependent person. Relatives makes up the shortfall in fees to enable the person to enter the home of their choice.

Yours sincerely,
V. TOWNSEND
(Proprietor),
Ashdown House Residential
Home for the Elderly,
Ashdown Street, Daventry,
Northamptonshire NN11 4AR.
March 1.

From Mrs Lillian Taylor

Sir, Just to put into perspective the Government's apparent reluctance to adopt the royal commission's proposals at an annual cost of £1.2 billion, this is roughly equivalent to half the pre-tax profits of NatWest Bank, announced last week (report, Business, February 25).

Yours faithfully,
LILLIAN TAYLOR,
Ashdown, St Lawrence Avenue,
Bridgwater, Kent TN4 0XA.
March 2.

From Mr Michael Ackroyd

Sir, As a European well used to travelling in Egypt, I take great exception to Edward Welsh's generalisation (feature, "How safe is your holiday?", March 3) about the "vast, impoverished peasantry" and their "fanaticism". It behoves all travellers to whatever destination to take sensible precautions and to respect local customs. Foreign Office advice is readily available.

Far from channelling its frustrations against tourists, this same vast peasantry, among whom I am fortunate enough to have several close friends, are among the most hospitable people on the planet.

Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL ACKROYD,
PO Box 1290, London W6 8GY.
mra@iail.pipex.com
March 3.

Millennium Moment

From Mrs H. W. T. Willoughby

Sir, The reported statement by a spokesman for the new Millennium Experience Company that "Church leaders would be welcome guests" at the midnight millennium celebration in the Dome (report, February 25; see also letter, March 4) — and in the context of your report these "guests" would seem to be the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster — must surely rank as the most patronising statement of all time.

Yours faithfully,

HILARY WILLOUGHBY,
2 The Grange, Mere,
Wiltshire BA12 6DZ.

Where now brown cow?

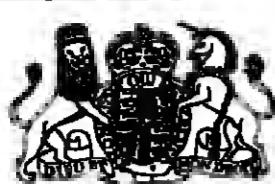
From Professor Michael J. Stock

Sir, Robin Otter (letter, March 3) claims that the hide of Edward Jenner's red-brown Gloucester cow can be seen in the Gloucester Folk Museum. However, we have a red-brown cow's hide on display in our medical school library that is said to be "Blossom", the cow from which the milkmaid Sarah Nelmes contracted cowpox.

St George's is very proud of its association with Dr Jenner: we have a Jenner Society, a Jenner Wing and his bust sits in our foyer — so the possibility that Blossom was not his cow is very disconcerting. Perhaps he had more than one?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL J. STOCK,
Department of Physiology,
St George's Hospital Medical School,
Tooting SW17 0RE.
stockm@sghs.mhs.ac.uk
March 4.

Business letters, page 31



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 4: The Queen this morning visited The Young Vic Theatre, London SE1, and met teachers and children from the Sacred Heart School, Southwark attending a theatre workshop.

The Queen then visited the Lyceum Theatre, London WC2, and met theatre staff and members of the cast of *Oklahoma!*

The Queen subsequently visited the Almeida Theatre and rehearsal rooms, London N1, and met members of the casts of *Spear and Pliny*.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this morning visited Angels & Bernards, theatre costume, London NW1.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh attended a lunch hosted by The Society of London Theatre at The Ivy Restaurant, London WC1.

Her Majesty, Patron, this afternoon visited the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London WC1.

The Duke of Edinburgh this morning visited the Royal National Theatre, London SE1, to see the technical refurbishment of the Cottesloe Theatre.

His Royal Highness subsequently visited the Adelphi Theatre, London WC2, and met members of the cast of *Chicago*.

The Duke of Edinburgh later visited the Royal Court Youth theatre at the Duke of York's Theatre, London WC2.

The Duke of Edinburgh this afternoon visited Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, London W1.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a performance of the Royal National Theatre's production of *Okahoma!* at the Lyceum Theatre, London WC2.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 4: The Prince of Wales today visited Chwyd, which was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Chwyd, Sir William Gladstone.

His Royal Highness this morning visited Brickfields Pond, Rhyl.

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh will visit the Northern General Hospital, The Devonshire Quarter, Sheffield University, from 9.45am.

Adrian Ryan

A service of celebration and thanksgiving for the life and work of Adrian Ryan, painter, will be held on March 30 at 2.30pm, at St James, Finsbury.

Lord Dunsany

A memorial service for Randal Plunkett, 9th Baron Dunsany, will be held at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Sunday, March 21, 1999, at 3.15pm.

Blundell's School

The Hon Francis Maude, MP, officially opened the new Library and IT Centre and delivered the Inaugural Blundell's Lecture at Blundell's School yesterday.

Baron Trotman

The life barony conferred upon Sir Alexander James Trotman has been gazetted by the style, title and style of Baron Trotman, of Osmotherley in the County of North Yorkshire.

**BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000**

Funeral service

SIR ANTHONY NUTTING
The funeral service for Sir Anthony Nutting was held yesterday at Holy Trinity, Brompton. The Rev Alastair Millar officiated and Mr Robin Beare gave an address. Among those present were:

Margaret Lady Nutting, Viscountess Nutting; Sir John Nutting QC, and Lady Nutting and Mr and Mrs David Nutting; sons and daughters-in-law, Mrs Zara Nutting (daughter), Mr James Nutting, Mr and Mrs Nutting; Mr and Mrs Michael Nutting; Mr and Mrs Stephen Nutting; Mr and Mrs Alexander Nutting; and Mr and Mrs John Kaye, Nutting's grandchildren. Mr and Mrs John Paul, Nutting's stepson and stepdaughter-in-law; Mr and Mrs Howard Nichols and Mrs Betty and Lady Miranda Stewart (grandchildren); Mr and Mrs Guto de Causdale, brother-in-law and sister-in-law; Mrs Barbara Nutting; Mr and Mrs Nicholas Nutting; Mrs Oliver Brooks; Sir Nigel Strudwick; and other members of the family and friends.

THE PRINCE OF WALES later visited Cefndy Enterprise's Healthcare in Rhyl.

His Royal Highness this afternoon visited Penbedi Farm, near Mold, where he toured the farm and had a discussion with a group of upland farmers.

The Prince of Wales then visited Ruthin Gaol, a historic building which is to be improved and enhanced.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 4: The Duke of York this morning opened the British Council Fashion Design Workshop at Ho Chi Minh University College of Fine Arts.

Afterwards, His Royal Highness visited the Wellcome Trust Project and Ho Chi Minh Hospital for Tropical Diseases.

Later The Duke of York visited the World Health Organisation's Conference on "Rolling Back Malaria".

This afternoon His Royal Highness arrived in Hanau.

Later, The Duke of York attended an opening ceremony for the Hilton Hanau Opera Hotel.

This evening His Royal Highness attended a reception for Chevening Scholarship students, MOD English language students and alumni of British Universities at the Hilton Hotel.

Later, The Duke of York attended a dinner for the Commonwealth Ambassadors at the Press Club.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 4: The Princess Royal, President, visiting the Royal National Theatre's production of *Okahoma!* at the Lyceum Theatre, London WC2.

His Royal Highness, Patron, this afternoon visited Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, London W1.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a performance of the Royal National Theatre's production of *Okahoma!* at the Lyceum Theatre, London WC2.

His Royal Highness, Patron, this evening attended a Residential Meeting Reception at Cheltenham Park Hotel, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire (Mr Henry Elwes).

His Royal Highness this morning visited Cheltenham Park Hotel, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire (Mr Henry Elwes).

Birthdays today

The Hon David Astor, CH, 87; Lady Elizabeth Basset, Extra-Woman of the Bedchamber to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, 91; the Right Rev Thomas Butler, Bishop of Southwark, 59; Admiral Sir Simon Casals, 71; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, KT, 72; Earl Grey, 60; Mr Anthony Hedges, composer, 66; Archibald Ruthven Henn, former Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, 88; Mr R.A.E. Herber, former President, Royal Horticultural Society, 65; Mr Richard Hickox, conductor, 51; Mrs Ann Lingay, former Head Teacher, Buxton School, 57; Lord Mackay of Clashfern, KT, 73; Miles Elwyn March, actress, 65; Sir Derek Mitchell, former civil servant, 77; Lord Norton of Louth, 48; Miss Elaine Paige, singer, 51; Sir Jack Bumbell, former president, Industrial Tribunals, 70; Mr Ron Sandler, chief executive, Lloyd's of London, 47; Mr Barry Tuckwell, horn soloist and conductor, 68; Mrs Des Wilson, former co-chairman, Campaign for Freedom of Information, 58.

Paviors' Company

The Earl of Inchcape, Prime Warden of the Paviors' Company, presented certificates to sea cadets from the London area taking up berths in TS *Royalist*, and afterwards presided at a dinner held at Ironmongers' Hall.

Rear-Admiral Patrick Row, Deputy Master of Trinity House, was the principal speaker. Among others present were:

The Master of the Tallow Chandlers Company, the Master and Founder of the Company of Master Mariners, the President of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects, the Chairman of London Chamber of Shipping and the Chairman of the Baltic Exchange.

Holborn Law Society

The President of the Holborn Law Society, accompanied by Mrs Margaret Gandy, held yesterday at Clothworkers' Hall the annual dinner held last night in the Great Hall, Holborn, London. Among those present were the Master of Holborn, the City of London, and the City of London.

Shipwrights' Company

The Earl of Inchcape, Prime Warden of the Shipwrights' Company, presented certificates to sea cadets from the London area taking up berths in TS *Royalist*, and afterwards presided at a dinner held at Ironmongers' Hall.

Rear-Admiral Patrick Row, Deputy Master of Trinity House, was the principal speaker. Among others present were:

The Master of the Tallow Chandlers Company, the Master and Founder of the Company of Master Mariners, the President of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects, the Chairman of London Chamber of Shipping and the Chairman of the Baltic Exchange.

THE INSTITUTION OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS

The Institution of Chemical Engineers' Annual Dinner was held last night at The Savoy. The President, Mr G.A. Campbell, welcomed as principal guest speaker Sir Clive Thompson, President of the CIB.

Foundation for Science and Technology

Lord Jenkins of Roding, Chairman of the Council of the Foundation for Science and Technology, presided at a lecture and dinner discussion held last night at the Royal Society.

Paviors' Company

The following have been installed officers of the Paviors' Company for the ensuing year:

Master, Mr Peter D.M. Gell; Upper Warden, Mr John E. Cruise; Renter Warden, Mr Keith C. White.

Meeting

Three Faiths Forum

The Speaker presented Grand Rabbi Rene Samuel Sirat of Paris with the ICCJ Interfaith Gold Medal at a meeting of the Three Faiths Forum held yesterday at the House of Commons, by courtesy of Mr Ivor Caplin, MP. Sir Sigmund Sternberg presided.

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PERSONAL COLUMN

The following have been installed officers of the Paviors' Company for the ensuing year:

NEWS

Protest to US in banana trade war

■ Britain's relations with the United States were jolted last night as a long-running dispute over banana imports to Europe flared into a trade war.

The American Ambassador to London was summoned to the Department of Trade and Industry to face a fierce protest over Washington's action in imposing sweeping new duties on £350 million worth of European goods, including the Scottish cashmere industry..... Page 1

Uganda pledges justice for victims

■ Holding out death notes placed on the chests of two victims of Monday's slaughter of tourists in south-west Uganda, an army colonel vowed that his men would hunt down and kill the Rwandan rebels responsible. "It will not be a day; it will not be a week — but we will get them"..... Pages 1, 16, 17

Royal day out

Prince Philip landed the plum part when he and the Queen spent a day touring London's胎land yesterday..... Page 1

GM fears on water

The water industry is demanding a moratorium on the commercial planting of genetically modified crops amid fears that the chemicals used on them may heavily pollute rivers, lakes, and reservoirs..... Page 2

Foster pair charged

A couple who were at the centre of a nationwide hunt after they disappeared for four months with their foster daughters are to be charged with abduction, police said..... Page 5

'Imposter wife' claim

A husband turned cold against his wife because he believes she has been replaced by an imposter, a court heard. Alan Davies is convinced that his real wife died in a car crash..... Page 7

Premium on students

Universities will receive a 5 per cent "premium" for every student they recruit from poor areas, to try to ensure that an extra 45,000 places go to groups under-represented on campuses..... Page 8

Dome super sale

The 90ft body in the Millennium Dome is to be the prize lot in a sale of the exhibition's contents at the end of 2000..... Page 9

Monica publicity train leads to Essex

When Monica Lewinsky began her affair with President Clinton, it is unlikely that she saw it ending with a trip to the Lakeside shopping centre in Essex. The shopping mecca is, however, where she will be at 11.30am next Saturday, signing copies of Andrew Morton's book and fulfilling her requirement of the modern book deal — the publicity tour..... Page 3



The Cornish piper Merv Davey prepares to lead today's St Piran's day parade over the dunes at Perranporth to St Piran's oratory

Vanessa staff sacked

The BBC has sacked three members of staff from *The Vanessa Show* over allegations that fake guests appeared on the programme..... Page 11

Westminster fee plan

Plans to charge tourists £6.50 to visit the Palace of Westminster over summer could be blocked by the House of Lords..... Page 12

US pilot acquitted

Italians reacted with anger to the acquittal of a US Marine pilot on all charges of reckless flying when his jet sheared a gondola cable above an Italian ski resort, killing 20 people..... Page 13

Iraq lures pilots

Iraqi fighter pilots are trying to lure British and American aircraft over hidden surface-to-air missile sites as part of daily confrontations over Iraq..... Page 14

Iran backs reform

Reformers supporting President Khatami of Iran appear set for victory in the first ever local elections which have highlighted the waning influence of his hardline opponents..... Page 15

Tiananmen petition

Ten years after the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, relatives and friends of those killed or injured have petitioned the National People's Congress to apologise..... Page 18

Dome super sale

The 90ft body in the Millennium

Dome is to be the prize lot in a

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Rates held: The European Central Bank held its key interest rate unchanged at 3 per cent, ignoring pressure from Germany to cut the cost of borrowing in countries within the single currency..... Page 27

Insurance payout: Royal and Sun Alliance is returning £750 million in cash to investors despite suffering a 39 per cent fall in operating profits..... Page 27

Rolls-Royce boom: Rolls-Royce ended the year with a £10.4 billion order book, and work worth £2.2 billion in the pipeline..... Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 index rose 53.1 to 6101.4. The pound fell 1.00 cent to \$1.6077 and rose 0.15p against the euro to 67.35p. The sterling index rose to 102.4 from 102.5..... Page 30

Football: Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, is expected to be away from the game for several weeks after suffering a heart attack before the game against Sheffield Wednesday..... Page 52

Motor racing: Damon Hill was willing to bury his hatchet to press the claims of his adversary, Michael Schumacher, as this year's Formula One world champion..... Page 52

Rugby union: Richmond were meeting to decide whether the club should apply to go into administration after Ashley Levet reduced his investment..... Page 35

Athletics: Britain's most prestigious meeting has been downgraded to third-division status by the International Amateur Athletic Federation..... Page 36

Pride of the valleys: Stereophonics may be making it big in America, but the group remain rooted in their native Glamorgan..... Page 36

Kula comeback: Written off last year, Kula Shaker — led by Hayley Mills' son, Crispian — have returned with a strong new album called *Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts*..... Page 37

Richard Morison: The "thumbing down" issue is the chic cultural chatter of our day. Which is presumably why 150 of our finest thinkers are going to spend a whole weekend discussing it..... Page 35

Goethe celebrated: The 250th anniversary of the German writer's birth is marked with a weekend of concerts at the South Bank in London..... Page 35

Loose talk: Drawstring pants are back. And if you want to avoid looking like a pup, let them hang around your naval..... Page 20

Betrayed: "As a matter of fact I am in crisis. As of Thanksgiving, I've discovered a lifetime of betrayal from my husband, and I'm divorcing him." Lynn Redgrave talks to Jamie Lawrence..... Page 21

Joe Joseph: "Robin Cook, Jack Straw, Frank Dobson, Alastair Campbell... names that have the power to inspire all of us to reassess our lives and to wonder if maybe it isn't time to emigrate"..... Page 21

Damage limitation: Scotland Yard's press officers are breathing a sigh of relief..... Page 39

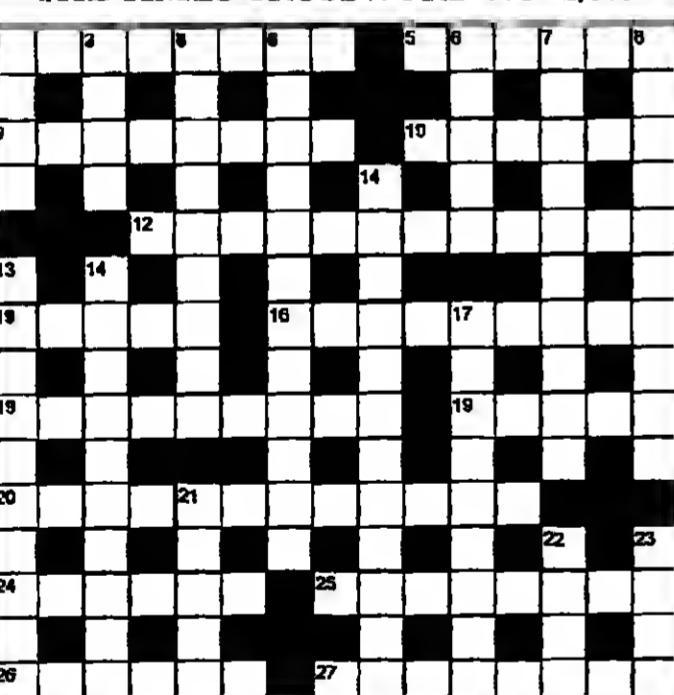
Teatime: More newscasters are being turned into stars in the battle for teatime ratings..... Page 41

Team effort: The couple hired to raise standards in one of the UK's worst state schools..... Page 42

Harry Blackmun, former US Supreme Court Justice; Captain David Goodwin, Taranto veteran; Richard Alca, painter..... Page 25

EU/US banana wars: cost of care for the elderly; advice for travellers; News at Ten; breastfeeding problems; scientists' fight against disease; Dr Jenner's cow..... Page 23

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,043



ACROSS

1 Getting rid of bribes flung back in face (8).

5 Doctinaire person gets chap in a temper (6).

9 Poet penning English sketch in outline (8).

10 Incomplete description after motorway accident (6).

12 Having no first-hand experience? (12).

15 Name on end of title deed to make legal (5).

16 I can get queen ant on the move (9).

18 Fish caught in Scottish one, maybe (6).

19 Fruit that is old and turning bad (5).

20 Talking of a time during change-over (12).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,042

GLACIS IMPLICIT
A O H O A D U
LUSH INHOTWATER
N O N N N I K
ADOREO PLUMULES
E T I L O L
PRESSGANG WRITING
U L O N H E O A
TWERP DETHRONED
A M P R U F T
CREDITOR SOFTEN
R N N M T H R
ON THE LEVEL ARNE
S A S D E N A
SALESMAN RIDDLE

24 Lament bird that's extinct in Scots upland (6).

25 He sings but one musical sound (8).

26 Avoid being sweet with opponents at bridge (6).

27 Doctor's replacement joining explorer in London area (4,4).

DOWN

1 Swindle mum, making money (4).

2 Want to have bishop's authority over king (4).

3 Defeat, ended game (9).

4 One with an end in sight (12).

6 Out in Lake Victoria (5).

7 Unconventional art coach, I'm not using colour (10).

8 Old Times composer, perhaps, a model to one like me? (4).

11 Stewed pear — yet in tin (12).

13 Evil, bad pieces fabricated about Liberal (10).

14 A nominal inheritance (10).

17 OPEC soon compromise, initially dropping 50% throughout to make savings? (9).

21 Rub out Times puzzle finally (5).

22 State area covered by island (4).

23 Decorate supporter of crew (4).

Times Two Crossword, page 52

Weather by Fax

Dial 0324 followed by area number from page 100. Tel: 0181 464 5110. Fax: 0181 464 5110. E-mail: weather@times.co.uk

UK: London 0181 464 5127

Scotland 0181 464 5245

Wales 0181 464 5247

Channel Islands 0181 464 5248

Northern Ireland 0181 464 5249

Overseas 0181 464 5250

World: 0181 464 5251

Weatherfax 0181 464 5252

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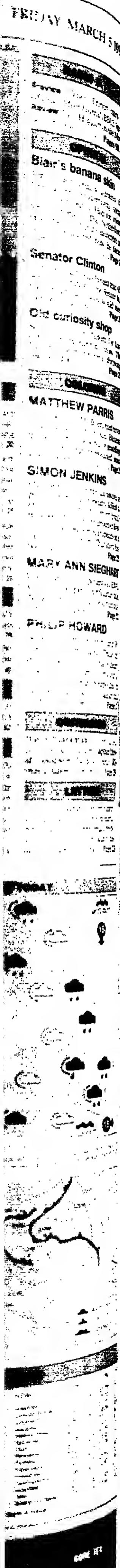
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BUSINESS • ARTS • MEDIA • SPORT • TELEVISION

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

Who's dumbing down?

Arts, page 35



2

Euro hits new lows as bank spurns Lafontaine's plea for rate cut

ECB refuses to bail out Bonn

By SAREE SHAH

THE European Central Bank refused in time to the aid of a sharply slowing German economy yesterday by leaving its key interest rate on hold at 3 per cent.

Official German figures showed its economy shrinking in the fourth quarter of last year. The Federal Statistics Office of Europe's largest economy yesterday reported that the country's gross domestic product contracted by 0.4 per cent in the final quarter of 1998, compared with the previous quarter, as exports weakened. For the year as a whole, the German economy grew 2.8 per

cent in January, compared with a year earlier. Herr Lafontaine does not accept the ECB's argument that interest rates are already low enough. Two consecutive quarters of negative growth represent a technical recession.

Mr Barrow said that the yearly figure for 1998 was boosted by a "sparkling" first quarter result.

Ahead of the ECB meeting Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's finance minister, yesterday repeated his pleas for an interest rate cut to help to pull his country away from high unemployment and the dangers of a deflationary spiral. German inflation stood at just 0.2 per

cent in January, compared with a year earlier. Herr Lafontaine does not accept the ECB's argument that interest rates are already low enough. In an interview published yesterday he said: "Inflation in Europe is at an all-time low. With this situation long-term interest rates aren't low but are around 3.5 per cent higher than gross domestic product growth."

The ECB, however, views Germany's unemployment problem as a structural issue and believes that interest rate cuts would not help. The relatively high recent growth of M3 money supply and the weakness of the euro against

other currencies also weighed against a rate cut.

The euro sank to new lows against both the pound and the dollar again yesterday, drifting below \$1.08 and closing at \$1.35 against sterling.

Germany has dropped broad hints that if the ECB is not willing to help to boost demand by cutting interest rate, it might resort to increasing government spending. In an attempt to boost demand, the German Government has encouraged generous wage settlements, which have come in over recent weeks at some 3.5 per cent to 4.0 per cent.

After yesterday's interest rate decision, Wim Duisen-

berg, the ECB president, said: "Wage developments are a matter of concern for the ECB. It would be the loosening of fiscal policy or a policy not in accordance with the Stability Pact."

He said that the outlook for price stability was unchanged, despite the risks to economic growth, and claimed that monetary policy was making its contribution to growth in the euro zone.

The French economy grew by 0.7 per cent in the last quarter of 1998 and Spain by 0.8 per cent. Only Italy is nursing a single currency's opponents in the UK valuable ammunition.

Commentary, page 29

By PATIENCE WHEATCROFT

WEBSITE: <http://www.ecb.int/>

STOCK MARKET WEBSITE: <http://www.moneymag.co.uk>

Business Today

Commentary: Not a word from our sponsor

Stock Markets: Allright reacts well

Equity prices: Up

Unit trusts: Up

Commentary, page 29



Turkey shoot

South African exodus to London may be an exodus too far

Page 33

STOCK MARKETS INDICES

FTSE 100 6101.4 (+3.11)

Yield 2.80%

FTSE All Share 2804.16 (+22.21)

Nikkei 14183.49 (+13.69)

New York Dow Jones 9494.52 (+19.85)

S&P Composite 1244.29 (+16.50)

US RATE

Federal Funds 4.75% (4.50)

Long bond 8.50% (8.00)

Yield 5.85% (5.70%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank 5.1% (5.7%)

Libor long gilt future (Jun) 115.42 (115.47)

STERLING

New York 1.6065* (1.6142)

London 1.6078 (1.6177)

Ed. 1.6047 (1.6118)

SFr. 2.3660 (2.3563)

Yen 108.64 (105.69)

Euro 102.8 (102.5)

US DOLLAR

London 1.0825* (1.0884)

Ed. 1.0709 (1.0612)

SFr. 123.50 (121.77)

Yen 108.27 (105.69)

Tokyo close Yen 122.60

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 3-day May. \$11.75 (\$11.45)

GOLD

London close \$267.85 (\$266.65)

* denotes midday trading price

Exchange rates Page 28

Royal & Sun under fire over dividend

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

ROYAL & SunAlliance came under fire yesterday after the composite insurer revealed plans to return £50 million of surplus capital to shareholders, despite suffering a 39 per cent fall in profits last year.

RSA is to pay a special dividend of 48p as well as a final dividend of 15.2p. This helped to soften the impact of disappointing annual results and helped RSA shares to recover 5 per cent to 587p. A year ago they were 808p.

Bob Mendelsohn, chief executive, said RSA had finally completed its reorganisation after the troubled merger of Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance three years ago and was now determined to use shareholders' capital more efficiently.

After a financial review RSA had concluded that it could reduce its capital base by about 10 per cent. A special dividend of £50 million would be paid, he said, bringing the total amount that the company had returned to shareholders in the past 12 months to £1.25 billion.

As part of the special payment RSA is proposing to reduce the number of its shares with a consolidation which will see investors receive ten new shares for every 11 ordinary shares in RSA they hold.

However, Tim Young, insurance analyst at Teather & Greenwood, attacked the plan, saying RSA was effectively mounting a share buyback on a 9 per cent discount. "The combination of the 48p special dividend and the share consolidation means RSA will pay 52p for shares currently worth more than 580p. It's a share buyback at a discounted price. They'll pay £750 million for paper worth more than

£823 million at today's price. A straight buyback would have been better."

RSA insisted the payment was fair and ensured that shareholders' stakes in the company remained the same.

Group operating profits for 1998 slumped from £988 million to £602 million as severe weather losses and a sharp rise in claims almost halved worldwide profits from general insurance business to £322 million. Intense pressure in the investment and pensions marketplace meanwhile kept life insurance operating profits flat at £230 million despite a 6 per cent rise in sales during the year.

Mr Mendelsohn said he was unhappy with the results but said urgent steps were being taken to improve the situation. Yesterday RSA announced the sale of its US life business to Swiss Re for £240 million.

Tempus, page 30

IBM signs Dell deal

By ADAM JONES

IBM and Dell have signed a £16 billion (£10 billion) deal that will see Dell use IBM's technology in its computer hardware, emphasising that even the biggest names in the industry are now reluctant to go it alone.

The pair believe that their pact is the largest yet struck in the information technology sector, which is undergoing rapid consolidation.

Dell will initially buy disk drives, flat panel displays,



Sir Ralph Robins, left, chairman, and John Rose want to expand maintenance operations

memory chips and networking equipment from IBM, in a tacit admission that IBM's technology is more advanced. The supply arrangement, which may be extended to other technologies, will not stop either side dealing with third parties.

Both IBM and Dell shares rose after the deal was announced in the US yesterday. Dell shares were up almost \$2.50 to \$33.50 in late-morning Nasdaq trading. On the New York Stock Exchange, IBM shares traded at \$175, up \$2.25

per cent supply business has been growing by 44 per cent a year since it was formed in 1993. It brought in sales of \$6.6 billion last year. There had been speculation that the deal would involve IBM's personal computer business, but this is not the case.

Both IBM and Dell shares rose after the deal was announced in the US yesterday. Dell shares were up almost \$2.50 to \$33.50 in late-morning Nasdaq trading. On the New York Stock Exchange, IBM shares traded at \$175, up \$2.25

per cent

PENSION funds called the top of the market last year and withdrew more than £10 billion from the London stock-market last year. But their failure to reinvest means that many funds are now holding less than half their total assets in UK equities, against an average 58 per cent of their holdings earlier this decade.

According to Peter Warrington, a director of WVM, the pensions consultant which collated the figures, pension

Rolls-Royce boosted by demand for civil aircraft

By ADAM JONES

BUOYANT demand for civil aircraft helped Rolls-Royce, the aero-engine maker, to report an 18 per cent rise in pre-tax profits yesterday.

The company reiterated that it is gunning for another double-digit profit increase this year, despite an anticipated slowdown in the growth of orders as the aerospace market cools.

Rolls delivered about 900 engines in 1998. Profits were a record £325 million before tax. Turnover rose from £4.35 billion to £4.5 billion.

About 35 per cent of sales came from the aftermarket — the spare parts and support work that are the group's most profitable activities, although Rolls declines to disclose how much they actually make.

John Rose, chief executive, said the group wanted to expand further its maintenance operations. More joint ventures with the engine overhaul departments of airlines will be sought, following the formation of a repair company with American Airlines.

Mr Rose said Rolls would continue to collaborate with its two largest competitors, Pratt & Whitney and General Electric, on specific projects but stated that a merger was very unlikely, despite the trend for mega-mergers in the aerospace industry in general. He said engine manufacture had already been rationalised to just three global businesses.

Commentary, page 29

they were underweight in telecoms stocks and overexposed to oil exploration stocks, which fell by 61 per cent last year.

The best returns were shown by equity investments in Europe, which returned 30 per cent, and North America, where the return was 24 per cent. Over £6 billion of new money was invested in UK bonds during the year, while the return achieved was more than 20 per cent — only the second year in the past ten that UK bonds provided a better return than UK equities.

Pension funds produced average returns of 14 per cent during the year, equivalent to a real return after inflation of 11 per cent.

Returns on the UK equity proportion of pension funds, however, were 12 per cent, 2 per cent lower than the index. Pension funds underperformed the UK index because

Mirror outlines strategy

THE Mirror Group yesterday split out its manifesto for independence as rival bidders for the group face months of investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (Raymond Snoddy writes).

As Mirror announced a 9 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £100 million before exceptions, John Alwood, the new chief executive, said: "We are not going to sit around like turkeys waiting for Christmas."

Mr Alwood said Mirror will concentrate on newspaper and magazine publishing. That means the sale of its 20 per cent stake in the Scottish Media Group, which could bring in more than £100 million, an additional £40 million from the sale of its former Central London headquarters and up to £15 million of savings from scrapping the relaunch of *The Sporting Life*.

The MMC is investigating approaches from two local paper groups, Trinity and Regional Independent Media.

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PowerGen warns of £100m hit

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

POWERGEN gave warning yesterday that profits would be cut by at least £100 million this year because of poor returns in the electricity market and the forced sales of power stations.

The generator said £60 million would come off profits when it disposes of two power stations and that it had taken a £40 million knock in January and February from reduced demand for electricity and greater competition. There was also a £40 million reduction in December in power trading.

Some of the problem stems from a reduction in payments for keeping power stations available. This will worsen when the market is reformed.

PowerGen plunged to a £245 million loss for the nine months to December 31 after taking a £537 million charge for renegotiating expensive gas contracts. The City had expected a loss of £215 million. Pre-tax profits before exceptional charges fell 22 per cent to 292 million, compared with the previous nine months.

Earnings per share before exceptional fell from 44.3p to 38.8p. The final dividend, payable on May 13, was set at 14.1p making a total of 24.1p, an 11 per cent increase on a full-year basis.

City does not understand us, says Vickers chief

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

VICKERS, the marine engineer and tank manufacturer, yesterday accused the stock market of failing to understand its defence division, which provided almost 40 per cent of the company's revenues last year.

Paul Bussye, chief executive, said City analysts and investors did not appreciate the strength of the industry to the same extent as their counterparts in France, Germany and America.

"There is a negative perception here that surprised me," said M Bussye, a Belgian who took the top job at Vickers last year.

Analysts say Vickers's defence division is largely to blame for the slump in the company's share price from 230p in June to yesterday's price of 148p, down 1p on the day.

The value of outstanding defence contracts on Vickers's books has fallen to about £500 million from £800 million a year ago, mainly because of orders for the Challenger 2 tank being filled.

M Bussye said the division's best hope of winning a major contract rested with the Greek Government, which is expected to call tenders for a £1.5 billion-plus order within weeks.

Vickers said it is also pursuing several UK defence contracts worth up to £100 million each.



Paul Bussye said analysts and investors in Britain did not appreciate the strength of the defence industry

Vickers announced yesterday that its pre-tax profit for 1998 leapt to £157 million from £19.4 million in 1997 after booking profits of £162 million on the sale of several businesses, including Rolls-Royce Motor

Cars. Operating profit before exceptional was £42.1 million, down from £75.8 million previously, on the back of a 25 per cent fall in turnover to £892.5 million. On a continuing operations basis, however, turnover was up 2.6 per cent at £692 million.

A final dividend of 4.5p was declared, taking the full-year payout to an unchanged 7.2p. M Bussye said a strong order book would ensure an "ex-

cellent" year for Vickers's marine division, which provided 22 per cent of last year's turnover, though the division's earnings from the offshore oil industry would dip because of the weak oil price.

Eurostar cuts passenger aim

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

EUROSTAR, the international train service, has given up its "unrealistic" target of increasing passenger numbers beyond ten million a year after seeing operating losses still running at £90 million.

New management brought in last year to rescue the loss-making service has formally abandoned the founder company's original growth forecasts and is concentrating instead on revenue increases.

Although Eurostar cut operating losses last year by £40 million from the £130 million of 1997, it said that heavy discounting of tickets will be more limited in future. However, management is optimistic of breaking even by 2005.

Eurostar passengers increased by 6 per cent to 6.3 mil-

BAA agrees Eurotunnel shops deal

By CARL MORTISHED

BAA has taken up the challenge to turn the Eurotunnel terminus at Dover and Calais into airport-style shopping malls. The owner of Heathrow and Gatwick has agreed a contract worth about £100 million per year to take over the management of Eurotunnel's existing shops and extend the retail space.

The company says that it is now reaching a yield per passenger of £62, well up on the £39 low in 1997, when prices were heavily discounted.

Hamish Taylor, Eurostar managing director, said: "The passenger targets that had been set were totally unrealistic and it has been demoralising to staff to see that we are nowhere near those levels."

Pressure on oil explorers

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S struggling independent oil explorers will come under greater pressure to merge with rivals or sell out when the Oil Exploration & Production sector is abolished from the FTSE stock market indices.

FTSE International plans to fold the oil explorers into an enlarged oil sector where the seven British independents will be dwarfed by two multinationals, BP Amoco and Shell Transport & Trading. The seven E&P stocks are together worth just over £3 billion, compared with a combined value of £116 billion for BP Amoco and Shell.

The change will make it increasingly difficult for E&P stocks to attract investor interest. Caroline Cook, analyst at

Grocery bills to increase

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SUPERMARKET customers can expect to see their bills continue to rise despite the latest price war after evidence emerged that manufacturers of branded goods have been raising their prices.

Archie Norman, chairman of Asda, said yesterday that certain manufacturers have begun pushing up prices by between 5 and 8 per cent over the past three months. Lever Brothers, the producers of Persil washing powder, said it is introducing rises averaging 32 per cent, its first price increases in a year.

One food retailing analyst said he expects prices to begin edging higher. "There is some seasonal food inflation and the manufacturers price rises to take into account."

Prague losses mount

LOSSES at Prague Breweries, in which Bass has a controlling interest, quadrupled last year from almost £4 million to about £16 million as the Czech recession and brewery closures took their toll. Turnover was flat at just over £400 million, while volumes suffered a 6 per cent decline. The company had planned to raise funds through a rights issue. However, the minority shareholders have blocked the move and set up an action group to protect their interests. The group described Bass's management performance as "unacceptable".

Sanderson set to spend

SANDERSON BRAMALL said it has at least £20 million to buy rival car dealers and is seeking suitable ones in the Midlands and Yorkshire. The group, which last year paid £37 million for Charles Sidney, mainly sells Ford cars, but said that despite the US manufacturer's decision to buy Ford dealerships, it has had no approach. Its shares rose 17.5p to 203.5p, a seven-month high, as it unveiled 1998 pre-tax profits of £17.1 million, up from £15.6 million. Headline earnings per share were 31.7p (27.8p). A 4.25p final dividend makes 6.5p (5.52p).

Glycosciences database

OXFORD GLYCOSCIENCES will shortly launch the first of three databases of its protein expertise that it is developing with Incyte Pharmaceuticals, the American company that already earns substantial revenues from leading drug groups. Glycosciences is also working with Pfizer to identify proteins to measure the onset and progression of Alzheimer's disease. This collaboration is potentially worth \$50 million (£31 million). Increased research spending of £13.2 million led to increased annual losses of £8.7 million (£7.6 million).

Dorman appointed

BT and AT&T have appointed David Dorman, former chief executive of Pacific Bell, the US telecoms company, to run their new \$10 billion (£6 billion) international joint venture. Mr Dorman, 45, is currently chairman and chief executive of PointCast, the company that provides broadcast news on the Internet. It is the combination of telecommunications and Internet experience that has won him one of the top jobs in international telecommunications. The new venture will include all the international operations of BT and AT&T.

MFI sees sales slump

MFI FURNITURE yesterday revealed the extent of the trading problems that precipitated the departure of John Randall as chief executive last week. Sales at UK stores were down 20 per cent on last year in the four months to March 1. This was partly due to the company moving away from sales of small household goods. But sales of continuing products, mainly kitchens and bedrooms, were also down a steep 12.5 per cent in the same period. Total sales were down 13 per cent in the period, with total continuing product sales down 6 per cent.

Vehicle numbers fall

COMMERCIAL vehicle (CV) registrations in February fell 43.6 per cent to 12,462, the Society of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said yesterday. Every sector of the CV industry was down year-on-year. Registrations of light 4x4 utility vehicles fell 59.4 per cent to just 480. CV registrations so far this year are 27.4 per cent lower than for the first two months of last year. The SMMT blamed the March registration plan change and uncertainty over vehicle excise duty ahead of next week's Budget.

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Canada \$.....	2.572	2.38
Cyprus Cyp £.....	0.9031	0.8316
Denmark Kr.....	11.63	10.74
Egypt £.....	2.85	2.90
Finland Mkt.....	5.88	5.83
France Fr.....	10.21	9.43
Germany Dm.....	3.068	2.826
Greece Dr.....	504	485
Hong Kong \$.....	13.29	12.05
Iceland.....	129	108
Ireland £.....	17.24	16.01
Ireland P.....	1.2240	1.1350
Israel Shk.....	5.86	6.20
Italy Lira.....	3051	2614
Japan Yen.....	213.81	196.28
Malta.....	0.672	0.613
Netherlands Gld.....	3.465	3.108
New Zealand \$.....	1.18	1.05
Norway Kr.....	13.37	12.43
Portugal Esc.....	310.26	288.23
S Africa Rd.....	10.66	9.70
Spain Pta.....	258.58	239.70
Sweden Kr.....	14.10	13.00
Switzerland Fr.....	2.514	2.296
Turkey Lira.....	594159	554867
USA \$.....	1.715	1.572

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Legal &
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ELEMENTS, the company emerged from the merger of Harrison Bros and the difficult trading of 1998 had a record year and were ninth in the London Stock Exchange's 1000. Sales from its chemical, energy and pharmaceuticals divisions rose 10.5% to £1.1 billion. The company's profit from continuing operations rose 10.5% to £150 million. Sales from its chemical, energy and pharmaceuticals divisions rose 10.5% to £1.1 billion. The company's profit from continuing operations rose 10.5% to £150 million.

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ances down

sales slump

numbers fall

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of the population
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Today the Dome will echo with joyful celebrations. Fanfares will sound and new sponsors will be revealed. Sceptics will be assured that the money is veritably pouring down the Thames to Greenwich and that the Dome's demands on the public purse will not exceed the original budget. Mr Blair's man on the case, his old friend Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has declared categorically that the target of £150 million in commercial sponsorship will be reached.

But when it comes to negotiating sponsorship deals, the New Millennium Experience Company has not been in the strongest of positions. In fact, it has become increasingly desperate, a fact not wasted on the commercial organisations on the other side of the negotiating table. They are not all buying their place in the Dome publicity with hard cash.

The Comptroller and Auditor General, Sir John Bourn, has already voiced his doubts over whether the Dome's sums will add up. An analysis of the sponsorship arrangements would be unlikely to provide him with comfort. For the figures that are being broadcast do not all represent new money destined for getting the Dome up and running. Much of the apparently pledged funds are headed for promotional campaigns up and down the country, which may not be so far removed from the sort of promotional efforts that the organisations regularly undertake.

The Dome accounts do allow £50 million for Dome-related millennium projects around the country. Maybe that money was always destined to come off the £150 million sponsorship target. But that would leave at least two-thirds of the sponsorship money heading towards Greenwich and that does not seem to be the case.

There is a degree of coyness on the subject which has prompted John Redwood, the Opposition spokesman on Trade and Industry, to table some probing questions. Among them, he might like to ask why Stansted is to be the millennium airport rather than the one down in Docklands. Could it be that BAA had determined to spend £12 million on the airport anyhow? Well, now that money is part of the £6 million proclaimed as BAA sponsorship. In fact, just £3 million is going to the Dome, the remaining £1.8 million will sponsor the Millennium Youth Games.

Marks & Spencer is a £12 million sponsor. That breaks down into just £6 million for Greenwich and £6 million for the Children's Promise project, a worthy fundraising effort, but not one that will fund the Dome. British Aerospace is another £6 million sponsor, which is only committing £3 million to Greenwich.

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

The companies are not to be blamed for squeezing the best possible deals out of the organisers. They have decided, or been persuaded, in some cases even by Mr Blair himself, that they should back the big project. But they are being careful with their cash. Does advertising in the Dome guide count as sponsorship? If just might. In which case, Sir John has reason to fear for the public purse.

Euro's nightmare scenario unfolds

EUROPE'S nightmare scenario has not taken long to unfold. After just two months, Wim Duisenberg has felt obliged to concede that the economies so painlessly coexisting together by having to meet the Maastricht convergence rules already seem to be diverging once more. While countries such as Ireland and Spain benefit to an embarrassing degree from the big cuts from their previous inter-

est rates, euroland's German powerhouse appears to be drifting ineluctably into a recession.

Mr Duisenberg is indulging in a classic piece of English understatement when he says that the German slowdown complicates monetary policy. Whatever may happen in the future, it is plain that a key argument of the euro's critics is correct. No single interest rate is yet suitable for the whole of the eurozone.

Oskar Lafontaine's call for "a policy mix for growth" has certainly gained credibility from the revelation that the German economy shrank by 0.4 per cent in the last quarter of 1998. Compare the slight rise in the worse-placed UK economy. Asia and Russia are hurting an economy where manufacturing still matters.

The ECB argues that Germany's troubles are structural, not cyclical, in order to justify its resistance to German bullying. Emphasising independence is clearly a vital plank in building ECB credibility.

A glance at the foreign ex-

changes shows that there is a long way to go. An 8 per cent drop against the dollar and 5 per cent against sterling was not what the euroland fathers had in mind for the first two months.

The bickering has not helped. Mr Duisenberg understandably called on politicians to help steady the ship and rebuild confidence in the new currency. The thought remains, not just in Herr Lafontaine's mind, that if it were not for the euro, the Bundesbank would be cutting rates now.

Supporting structural changes must take time. Strong nerves will be needed if the first serious challenge is not to blight the new currency permanently. But entrenched positions should be avoided.

Another pressure point will come in two weeks' time. Next month's ECB meetings look more crucial. By then the European Commission should have slashed growth forecasts for the region as a whole. That will give France and Germany ammunition to intensify pressure on the

interest rates nor the productivity levels of the British workforce. His commitment to keeping the UK an aerospace powerhouse cannot be questioned.

Yet, despite wrenching market share from Pratt & Whitney and General Electric, Rolls is still the subject of suspicion in some quarters of the City. Analysts seem determined to find fault, some suggesting Rolls is selling engines too cheaply in the hope of a profit on spares and repairs, others even fearing that Rolls might make such good engines that they will destroy their own after-market for spares and maintenance. Rolls' response is to let the figures tell the truth.

The company yesterday met its target of double-digit earnings growth. If it can do so again next year, investors might be forced to acknowledge that the company is doing something right.

Nott done

WHEN Sir John Nott took on the chairmanship of Hillsdown six years ago, the hope was that the former Defence Secretary would rapidly refine the extraordinary bundle of businesses that Sir Harry Solomon had assembled. Not quite. He waited until last year to demerge the housebuilder, Fairview, and Terranova, chilled foods, driven to action by the failure of takeover talks with Unigate. Now Sir John is moving on. Hillsdown still combines furniture, poultry, and Chivers jams. A dog's breakfast.

Williams in danger of FTSE exit

By PAUL DURMAN

WILLIAMS, the security and fire protection group, is in danger of losing its place in the FTSE 100 list of Britain's leading companies.

Concern that Williams will shortly lose the support of index-tracking funds contributed to a 16% fall in its share price yesterday to 348p. The company, one of the star performers of the 1990s, is now worth £2.5 billion — making it substantially smaller than EMAP, Energis, Misys and South African Breweries, all of which are currently outside the FTSE 100.

Williams has recast itself as a service group, and yesterday pointed to growth of 21 per cent in sales and 24 per cent in profits from its security systems and service group. Roger Carr, chief executive, plans that service businesses should grow from 40 to 60 per cent of the group over the next two years.

Some analysts remain sceptical. One said: "As ever, with

Williams, there's a quite interesting 'jam tomorrow' story. But fund managers are less trusting than they were ten years ago."

Underlying operating profits improved by 6 per cent to £302 million last year. The £170 million Williams made on the sale of its DIY fillers and coatings to ICI and of its NuTone business in the US enabled it to increase pre-tax profits from £254 million to £462.5 million.

Williams is expected to receive another £300 million from the flotation of Robbialac, its Portuguese paint company, and of its regional paint companies in the US.

The group said its continuing businesses, which include Yale locks, Chubb alarm systems and Kidde fire extinguishers, increased sales by 6 per cent and profits by 11 per cent at constant currencies. A final dividend of 10.04p a share lifts the total by 3.1 per cent to 16.29p.

Nott to step down at Hillsdown

By ROBERT COLE

SIR JOHN NOTT, the former Tory Defence Secretary, is to retire from Hillsdown Holdings, the troubled food group (See Commentary, this page).

Sir John has been at the helm of Hillsdown for nearly six years, during which time the sprawling conglomerate built by Sir Harry Solomon, his predecessor, has been dismantled. Sir John will be replaced by a non-executive chairman, Peter Jacobs, latterly chief executive of healthcare provider BUPA.

Hillsdown yesterday reported a fall in underlying pre-tax profits from £100.5 million to £80.2 million. Poor conditions in the poultry business were blamed for the decline.

Pay-TV merger is off

By RAYMOND SNODDY

MEDIA EDITOR

PLANS for a £14 billion merger of BSkyB and France's Canal Plus, Europe's two biggest pay-television operators, have been abandoned.

Two serious problems quickly emerged. One was disagreement over who should run the merged entity and the different management styles of the French and of the Americans, Brilsons and Australians who run BSkyB.

The second was the position of News International, owner of *The Times* and 40 per cent owner of BSkyB. A merger with Canal Plus would have diluted News International's BSkyB stake. EU regulations also needed to be satisfied.

Elementis sees tough trading

By MARTIN BARROW

ELEMENTIS, the specialty chemicals company that emerged from the restructuring of Harrisons & Crosfield, yesterday gave warning that the difficult trading conditions of 1998 had continued into the first two months of the current year and were unlikely to improve in the short-term.

Lyndon Cole, chief executive, said: "We are under no illusions as to the competitive conditions we face, particularly given the uncertainty over the outlook for the global economy."

The company yesterday reported a rise in operating profits from £65.5 million in 1998, from £44.7 million in the previous year. Sales from continuing operations rose to £534.2

million, from £471.5 million. Adjusted earnings per share were 5p, up from 4.8p previously. The final dividend is lifted to 5p a share, from 3.6p, with a final 3p.

Elementis has emerged from 18 months of restructuring, during which the company has divested itself of interests in seven non-core businesses, raising £626 million. The company has returned £402 million of capital to its shareholders and spent £277.8 million on the acquisition of Rheox, a specialty chemicals company.

Although the restructuring was designed to unlock shareholder value, the shares have not performed well. Yesterday they rose 14p to 754p, compared with 177p in mid-1998.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Albright reacts well to takeover speculation



Roger Carr saw Williams shares retreat despite a profit rise. It is likely that the company will lose its FTSE 100 place

REVIVED speculative buying in heavy trading hoisted Albright & Wilson 14p to 109p. Almost 13 million shares changed hands with talk in the Square Mile suggesting a bid of 125p a share is on the way. That would value the specialty chemicals group at £391 million.

Several large parcels of shares went through in late trading, including 2.8 million at 102p, 1.37 million at 103p, and 900,000 at 103.5p.

The speculators say the bid will come from across the Channel where rival chemical maker Rhodia is flexing its corporate muscle after its demerger from Rhone Poulenc. Williams certainly looks vulnerable, having seen its shares tumble from 207p a couple of years ago.

Brokers say trading conditions remain difficult and Albright & Wilson may struggle to meet the earnings target of 14p a share that some had forecast.

Share prices generally sported some useful gains but closed below the best of the day in spite of the strong opening lead for the Dow Jones industrial average in New York where investors became excited by news of the link-up between computer companies IBM and Dell.

The FTSE 100 index, up almost 70 points at one stage, eventually closed with a gain of 53.1 at 101.4. Much of the interest was concentrated among blue chips with the rise in the FTSE 250 index restricted to 27.9 at 5314.8.

Total turnover was 1.14 billion shares, but investors remained cautious ahead of last night's decision on European rates, today's US economic data and next week's Budget.

The market seemed unimpressed with final results from Williams, down 10p at 348p, and it now seems inevitable that the group will lose its position as a constituent of the top 100 companies when the steering committee meets next week. Prestige profits were up, but boosted by an exceptional profit of £16 million from the disposal of several businesses. Williams, whose chief executive is Roger Carr, said the results reflected the benefits of the Chubb acquisition.

Others under threat of losing their place as top 100 constituents are Tomkins, down 5p to 125p; Billiton, up 1p to 133p; and Safeway, 3p up cheaper at 252p. They are

from PowerGen, down 19p at 761p, also had a knock-on effect on rival National Power, 15p up off at 487p. Dresdner Kleinwort, the broker, has reduced its recommendation from "hold" to "reduce".

High-flying Select Appointments retreated 3p to 878p with C.K. Miles, finance director, unloading 100,000 shares at 880p. It reduces his holding to 35,525. The price has come up from a low of 533p since October.

Britannia finished with a rise of 19p at 101.84 as Harold Contam, chairman, picked up 2,000 shares at 101.90. It takes his total holding to 3,500 shares, or less than 1 per cent.

Druid Group was 22p dearer at 113.75 after John Pocock, managing director, sold 75,000 shares at £13.05.

He still holds 679,665, or almost 3 per cent.

Tandem firmed 4p to 215p after Harry Turpin, a director, sold 2.29 million shares, 2.4 per cent, at 21p. John Hanson, a private shareholder, has sold 4.6 million shares, or 4.9 per cent, from an disclosed sum.

Profit-taking left Alexander Russell 15p cheaper at 117.5p. The group confirmed it had received a bid approach last month. Since then, nothing fresh has emerged to excite the speculators.

Computerland continued to reel from this week's profits warning with the price closing 11p down at 89p.

Tadpole Technology enjoyed one of the best performances of the day, climbing 4p to 134p. The group is carrying out tests with the water companies on a new portable information system that is expected to be a money spinner for the group.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Dealers reported an inversion of the curve yield as shorts recovered some of Wednesday's losses stemming from the absence of an interest rate cut, while longs gave up ground.

In the future pit, the June series of the long gilt eased 4p to 115.43 as a total of 31,000 contracts were completed. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2002 was 3p dearer at 110.06.

□ **NEW YORK:** Shares were sharply higher in late morning trade after news of the IBM and Dell technology pact boosted the troubled high-technology sector. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 158.65 higher at 9,434.53.

Oil exploration and production companies have been hard hit by the collapse in the oil price, so much so that they will be forced to exit as a sector from

From then on, they will be lumped back in the wider oil and gas sector that already includes the likes of BP Amoco, up 45p at 902p, and Shell, 18p up dearer at 349p.

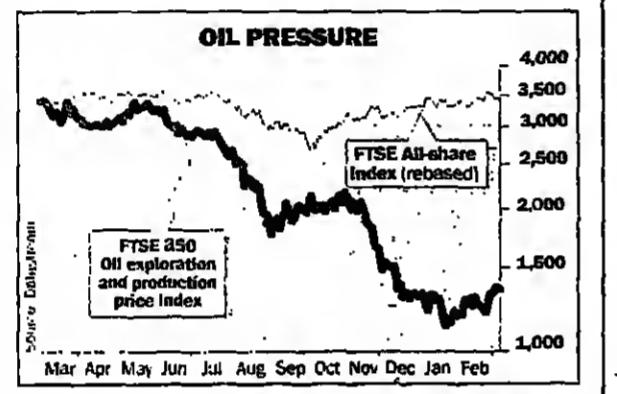
BT Alex Brown, the broker, gave warning that extreme oil price pressure may precipitate further cor-

porate change, as the stocks attempt to maintain investor interest.

Yesterday share prices picked up with investors convinced that this month's Opec meeting will thrust out a solution to production quotas.

The problem has become so acute, they argue, that some members no longer have a choice.

Gains were seen in Enterprise, 16p up to 288p, Lusmo, 7p up to 129p, and Cairn Energy, 5p up to 100p. British Borneo rallied 10p to 115p.



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Others under threat of losing their place as top 100 constituents are Tomkins, down 5p to 125p; Billiton, up 1p to 133p; and Safeway, 3p up cheaper at 252p. They are

MAJOR INDICES

New York (Midday):	Close	Chg	Chg %
Dow Jones	9434.53 (+16.65)		
S&P Composite	1244.29 (+16.65)		
Tokyo:			
Nikkei Average	14183.45 (+13.05)		
Hong Kong:			
Hang Seng	9924.74 (+12.34)		
Amsterdam:			
AXS Indx	515.92 (-3.24)		
Sydney:			
ASX	2895.3 (+4.16)		
Frankfurt:			
DAX	4678.72 (-18.53)		
Singapore:			
Straits	1433.41 (+17.89)		
Brussels:			
SEB 20	3227.98 (+11.43)		
Paris:			
CAC 40	4087.99 (+83.83)		
Zurich:			
SWX	1355.50 (+19.93)		
London:			
FT 30	3742.3 (+14.01)		
FTSE 100	6712.4 (+53.73)		
FTSE 250	1141.8 (+2.18)		
FTSE Eurox 100	2703.53 (-4.54)		
FTSE All-Share	2804.10 (+22.21)		
FTSE Non Financials	2843.33 (+23.57)		
FTSE Govt Secs	153.37 (-0.65)		
FTSE 100	112.01 (-2.24)		
Barings	7841		
SEAO 100	1140.35		
ASX	1607.07 (-0.03)		
ESX 20	0.6752 (-0.0103)		
ESX 40	1.1745		
Exchange Index	102.81 (+0.1)		
Bank of England official rates (April)	163.44 (2.16)		
FFP	161.8 (2.26)		
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HSBC rose 18p to 168.04 after some bullish comments.

Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, has raised its target price to £22.80 and Goldman Sachs is said to be positive on the shares.

The disappointing numbers

RECENT ISSUES

Acorn Income Fund	101.5	...
Closes Dev Div	100	...
Enhanced Zero Trust	100	...
Gardiner Properties	7.8	...
Jupiter En Dev Pl	108	+ 1%
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	99	...
Lumax Warrants	320	- 10
NBA Quantum	110	...
South African Breweries	456	+ 16

are likely to be replaced by South African Breweries, 10p stronger, up 5p at 141.8, and Misys, down 2p at 101.4.

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South Africa's corporate chicken run may turn into a turkey shoot

The exodus to London could be an exposure too far, says Jon Ashworth

During the apartheid years, London was big on Marxist exiles and light on home-grown South African delights such as Outspan oranges and Castle Lager. Few would admit to holidaying in South Africa and no one supported the Springboks.

How times change. Today, the freedom fighters have gone home. Londoners can't move for South African labels and Cape Town has become the destination of choice. South African household names such as Anglo American and South African Breweries (SAB) have started springing up on the London Stock Exchange. For the estimated 300,000 to 400,000 South Africans living and working in Britain, this makes for a curious sense of déjà vu.

SAB, which brews Castle Lager, is the latest in a line of big South African blue chip names to seek a primary listing in London. Anglo American makes its London debut in May, and Old Mutual, the Cape Town-based insurance group, could follow in June, pending approval from members who vote on demutualisation on March 11.

All three are expected to win a place in the FTSE 100 index of leading shares, following a lead set by Gencor, the mining group, which spun off its base metals interests into Billiton in July 1997. Billiton, arrived with a bang, but has since seen its shares slide on weak metal prices, proving that membership of the FTSE 100 does not guarantee success.

The predominance of tracker funds ensures demand for FTSE 100 shares, but some UK fund managers are less than thrilled about this enforced exposure to South Africa — technically an emerging market. Such is the dominance of the companies involved that an entire chunk of South Africa — at a stroke — is being relocated to London.

The feeling among "ordinary" South Africans, white and black, is that the big boys are bailing out. As one Johannesburg banker put it: "The economy has not been good in the last 12 to 18 months. The man in the street is saying: 'These guys are off to London and we are stuck here.' Among reasonably well-informed professionals, there is definitely a perception that these companies are getting out."

This, then, is a late-Nineties version of what used to be called the "chicken run". In the final years of Afrikaner rule, white South Africans who emigrated were branded cowards for flitting the coop.

As a student in South Africa in 1985, I remember the shock when a group of white businessmen broke ranks to meet African National Congress leaders in Lusaka. This was a time of extreme paranoia, when even a hint of subver-



Graham Mackay is sensitive to charges that SAB has deserted South Africa

sion could lead to your being arrested and detained without trial. The late Gavin Rely of Anglo American, who led the contingent, became an enraged Pretoria's equivalent of "Hanoi Jane".

Business took the initiative then, and is doing the same again now, even if for economic rather than political reasons. With a selective loosening of foreign exchange controls, it was inevitable that Anglo and its bedfellows would go in search of new sources of capital.

Some see parallels with Hong Kong, from where Jardine Matheson moved its domicile to Bermuda in 1984 — the year Britain signed its agreement to hand back the colony to China. The listings of Jardine group companies were shifted to Singapore in 1995. The moves were greeted with anger in Beijing.

In London, South African companies have a stock market that is highly liquid and which gives them ready access to foreign pounds and dollars. Jan Newman, managing director of SG Hambros South Africa, said: "They are gaining efficiency in terms of raising capital and internationalising themselves."

Johannesburg has long been dominated by big-name players, such as SAB, Anglo American, Rembrandt and Gencor. Blocked from investing overseas, the big groups took stakes in each other, making for a notoriously illiquid stock market.

Backtrack

RICHARD KALMS, son of Dixons chairman Sir Stanley Kalms, is poised to rekindle his working relationship with the electrical retailer — nine years after he quit as corporate affairs director to plough his own furrow.

ITIS, a privately owned traffic information provider, has persuaded Kalms Jr to become a non-executive director alongside the former Tory Transport Minister, Steven Norris. His role will be to oversee the alliance announced yesterday between ITIS and Monoroute, the quantity named maker of vehicle-management sys-

tems that is listed on AIM. Specifically, he will help ITIS to persuade Dixons to stock its products, which include security tracking devices for cars.

Since he left Dixons in 1990, Mr Kalms has spent most of his time at Union Pictures, a TV and film production company. But he sold out last year to set up his own Internet consultancy called Hi Technology Ventures. "I consider myself the personal Internet adviser to Sir Stanley Kalms," he joked. "I tell him which buttons to press." And, by the sound of it, which car-tracking devices to stock.

Arch rival?

I AM told that if there is one thing that William Hague hates it is Archie Norman reminding people that he once gave the Conservative leader a job.

But our Archie, who is not only chairman of Asda but also chief executive of the Tories (and apparently known to some at Central Office as "that Grocer"), cannot help himself. At the Retail Week conference yesterday he was at it again, confounding the audience of several hundred: "I recruited him for a job once. I interviewed him at McKinsey and he worked for us as a consultant."

Norman went on to deny

that he harboured any ambitions to become Tory leader. A sure sign that he is gradually becoming more of a politician than a retailer.

Cutting edge

NEWS reaches me that Sanyo, the giant Japanese electronics group, has developed a revolutionary new bread-cutting board called "Bread plus". This fine product is made from ABS plastic (whatever that is) and has curiously designed sides to hold a loaf of bread in place while you cut it. On its product website, Sanyo points out that the board is "Y2K compliant". So, for that matter, is my old bread board, but I suppose it is not at the cutting edge of technology.

DOMINIC WALSH
city.diary@the-times.co.uk



WILDE Sapte, the City law firm, was celebrating on Monday night after its football team won the London Legal Football League thus bringing to an end the dominance of Gray's Inn, champions for the past four years. Wilde Sapte clinched the title with a 2-0 win over Slaughter and May — a particular pleasure for centre-half Bruce Macleod, the firm's grandly titled director of know-how, who previously worked at Slaughter and May and was up against several former colleagues and team-mates.

"I don't like the sound of it"



Sol Kerzner, the Sun City pioneer, with Naomi Campbell, the supermodel

Edgars, a department store group.

Graham Mackay, SAB's group chief executive, is sensitive to charges that the company has deserted South Africa. "We would have languished in South Africa and lost our growth prospects," he said. "There will be a lot of deals in this industry and we either have to take part or be a spectator."

Anglo American is merging with Minaro, its Luxembourg-registered cousin, to create a £6 billion entity. Anglo American plc. Known for its gold, diamonds, platinum and coal, Anglo represents a broad cross-section of South African life. Its interests span forestry (Mondi), car assembly (Samcor), sugar (Tongaat-Hulett), construction

(LTA), financial services (FirstRand), explosives (AECI) and wine estates (Vergelegen).

These are all household names in South Africa. The new-look Anglo will present itself as a global mining and natural resources company with related industrial activities. It is engaged in simplifying its arcane corporate structure, which is intimately bound up with De Beers, the diamonds group, and the interests of the Oppenheimer family.

Anglo says that the move to Pretoria will allow it to compete more effectively on the world stage and exploit new business opportunities. Listing particulars are due next month and dealings are expected to commence on May 25.

Old Mutual has negligible overseas interests, making this the most controversial of the newcomers. Fund managers have expressed unease about buying in a company so heavily exposed to South Africa. It has a token UK presence, owning two private client stockbrokers, Capel-Cure Myers and Albert E. Sharp, and selling unit trusts, but relies on South Africa for 90 per cent of its sales.

Other companies with their eye on London include Barlows (industrial), Del Monte (food), Sasol (oil-from-coal) and a clutch of IT companies: Dimension Data (Didata); Comshare; Datatec; and Exchange.

Interesting as all this is, one cannot escape the feeling that the only winners in this scenario

are the companies themselves. While Anglo and the rest load up on pounds and dollars, shareholders back home remain trapped by restrictive exchange controls.

South Africa's economy is in poor shape, with little sign of the much anticipated foreign investment. Crime is as big a problem as ever, and Nelson Mandela's departure from political life heralds a fresh period of uncertainty. Elections are due on June 2.

There is also no guarantee that Pretoria will relax its grip indefinitely. Trevor Manuel, the Finance Minister, has said that applicants will not automatically be granted the right to move to London. Those that do — like Billiton before them — may find their confidence in tracker funds has been somewhat overdone. The great corporate chicken run may yet turn into a turkey shoot.

However, the relationship

BUSINESS LETTERS

Outdoor team-building event is pleasing clients

From Mr Andrew Finan

Sir, The Times recently claimed ("Dramatic change to art of team building", Business Life, February 6) that organisations engaging in practical management development were turning away from outdoor team-building events to more artistic pursuits such as barefoot dancing and reading Shakespeare. Our statistics show otherwise.

Our company organises the **Challenge Trophy**, the UK's largest inter-business outdoor training event, and last year the number of teams taking part in the event grew by 56 per cent to 88 teams. This year we already have over 70 companies booked and are heading for a sell-out event by June. The number of women taking part last year grew by 270 per cent.

Our success lies in delivering a balance of physical, intellectual and practical challenges that are best tackled as a team and are within the reach of anyone who is reasonably fit. The formula works for our clients. Over 85 per cent of companies come back the following year, while 100 per cent say they reach their corporate objectives. We count Microsoft, BT, Lloyd's TSB, Cable & Wireless, Cisco, BP and Orange among our customers.

Barefoot dancing and reading Shakespeare might be just fine for some. However, if corporations wish to build stronger teams then outdoor management training offers proven benefits and is certainly more popular.

Yours faithfully,

ANDREW FINAN

(Director, Challenger UK

Marketing, London,

Sponsorship Bureau

International),

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25-37 Grosvenor Gardens,

London SW1W 0BS.

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE



MUSIC

Gidon Kremer takes his fiddle to the tango

PAGE 35

RECOMMENDED THIS WEEKEND

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

LONDON

ANDRE PREVIN 70TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: Showbiz, glamour and classical music combine in equal measure in this concert. Andre Previn's wife, Anna Karova, is joined by the high-profile conductor and pianist in songs by Mozart, Strauss and Dvorak. Barbican (0171-638 8891). Sunday, 7.30pm.

TOWARDS THE MILLENIUM: The centenary of a musical journey through the 20th century reaches the 1990s this year. In the first of two concerts this weekend (tomorrow, 7.30pm) Sir Simon Rattle conducts the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in a programme featuring three composers representing the globalising musical trends of the century. The second, with Sir John Adams, on Sunday (7.30pm) the London Sinfonietta and Voices Under James Wood explore the theme of applied music, from Steve Reich and Jonathan Harvey. Festival Hall (0171-960 4342). £6.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD: Sam Waters directs his repertory company in Congreve's mismatched comedy of manners. Orange Tree (0181-940 3633). Opens tonight, 7.45pm. £8.

ELSEWHERE

MANCHESTER: The Orchestra of the Royal Opera House give an operatic double-bill: Verdi, Wagner, Puccini and Wagner. Soloists include



André Previn celebrates 70 with a Barbican recital

Rita Cullen and William Dazeley. Edward Downes conducts. Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 5041). £6.

OXFORD: Music by Bach arranged by Mozart provides the inspiration for this year's Oxford Bach Week, 'Sov-Airs Almost All of Them'.

Premiered last month this is the work's second appearance during the company's current UK tour.

Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-820 0000). £10.

REVIEW: The Merchant of Venice: Sam Water's directorial debut. Tickets £10. Barbican (0171-960 4342). £6.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only ■ Some seats available ■ Seats at all prices

■ BLAVAT'S SNOWSHOW: The eccentric Russian clown and mime artist Slava Polunin returns, with new material and new clown, as well as his unforgettable finale. Piccadilly Theatre (0171-389 1734).

■ BLUE HEART: Carly Churchill's par of Days Heart & Desire and Blue Heart, a musical about a woman through locks with men. The Stamford-Cork directs for Off Our Joint. Pleasance Theatre (0171-609 1800).

■ THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE: THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY: Tricycle Theatre's shocking account of the sequence of mistakes. Victoria Palace (0171-934 1317).

■ THE THREE DAYS OF RAIN: Elizabeth Gaskell's novel of Richard Greenberg's play. Robin Lumsden directs the journey back to 1930. Donmar Warehouse (0171-388 1732). £5.

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

BELOVED (15): Oprah Winfrey is surprisingly powerful as a runaway slave haunted by portuguese, Lynch and her own self-hatred. Director Steven Daldry's evocative film, however, gets lost in the texture of heart of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize winner.

ESTEN (15): Thomas Vinterberg's blindingly black Danish farce features a dysfunctional family reunion. Shot with hand-held cameras, it manages to look spontaneous, giddy, and deliciously voyeuristic.

KINI & ADAMIS (NFT): Idioma Quiñones's African buddy movie is a mostly enchanting parable about two friends who share a dream but fail to come up with it. Good acting fits it out of the pub.

THE 20 STEPS (15): Hitchcock's witty take on Bucharin's ripper part is full of fabulouss set pieces. Robert Donat's smooth bachelor dashes across Scotland pursued by exam-

pling police and ruthless spies. A romance and good hand-cuffing rarely feel more than a frame away.

CURRENT

THE THIN RED LINE (15): A glittering cast of American soldiers lose their sanity in the South Pacific during the Second World War. An atmospheric, witty, Sean Penn and a remarkable director. £12.50.

YOUNG GUY (15): Bullet-proof comedy broadband with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love on the Internet. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

TITANIC TOWN (15): Julie Walters excels as a pugnacious Catholic housewife in this grim review of the sinking of the titanic. £12.50. Roger Michell directs.

URBAN LEGEND (15): Diane Barry's horror flick that dashes through an American campus with the help of a migraine-inducing orchestra.

ARTS

Rufus in tooth and claw

Whatever the doubts about Rufus Sewell's Macbeth, at least one must congratulate him on refusing to pander to his fan club in the balcony. If his performance is limited, it is also utterly unsentimental. You would have to postulate a MacTamberlane or a MacSaddam to find a harsher usurper of the Scots crown.

But then this Scotland is itself an unvariegated and, until the English invasion, brings a few dozen feet of blue sky, forbidding place. It is the land of the sunless noon or moonless midnight: black backcloth and walls, blood-red floor, shaggy

No room for sentiment: Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter as the royally unpleasant couple at the heart of a neo-brutalist *Macbeth*

lairds lit up by thinly glimmering spous, and so few props that, when stools, a table and six goblets appear for what one might call Macbeth's state picnic, the stage seems perilously overfurnished.

John Crowley's production is direct, fluent and pacy, but so spare one wonders why Macbeth covets its contents. On Sewell stomps like Mike Tyson entering the ring, a glowering, hoarse-voiced, figure in black leather. He is so much the ambitious soldier that his first great soliloquy comes across not as a tussle with his conscience but as a debate about his military preparedness. When he hears of Duncan's promotion of his son Malcolm to heir apparent, he packs so much menace into his declaration that this is a "step" to "overleap" that you might think he's whole staircase has been faulally o'releapt already. And from then on he sneers and angrily snaps at everything, from the thought that Banquo's progeny will one day be kings to his own insomnia.

Colin Teavan's new version of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* places this mythic choice in a land where people mostly speak with Ulster accents. The translation is not heavy-handed, but performed in the context of peace-process Ireland, one idea is clear: only the big sacrifices can bring the big rewards.

But while there is not too much room for uncertainty as to why Teavan and the director David Grant might want to see Euripides's tale on a Brutal stage at this moment, not everything in their production enjoys the same clarity. They have difficulty, in the end, in seizing the strange currents and political correspondences in the piece.

Certainly Grant goes to some pains to

is a sensual, at times almost feral woman, given to rubbing at her breasts, her hips, her crotch and her husband; but, to judge by the way she pushes him and he tugs her hair, its basis is rough sex. No wonder, perhaps, that he is soon ignoring her and she has become a stiff, waxen near-zombie.

Their bond is as unsentimentally handled as almost every-

thing else. The witches are disappointingly unminster maids in grey bonnets; but Peter Bayliss is a wonderfully dilapidated porter and Declan Conlon's fine Macduff the only seriously sensitive character onstage.

The evening is summed up by the moment Banquo gives Macbeth the diamond that the genial Duncan wishes to present to Lady Macbeth.

Maybe my eyes were affected by the muck, but I saw no real handover. You will find nothing very rich or exotic in this neo-brutalist production.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

● This review appeared in late editions yesterday

Euripides in Ulster

drop in contemporary references. He reconfigures the chorus, for example, as a hoard of spiced-up Blithe clones, ogling the warriors of Ancient Athens as their 1990s counterparts might members of Boyzone, but it offers no real signal of what is to follow.

Teavan could have been far more cavalier with the story, but it is the language that seems to be his abiding concern. His

new text is seasoned with freshly coined portmanteau words and snatches of Greek briskly compressed into Ulster English. Sometimes this works, but occasionally the linguistic freedom he takes simply grates on the sheer weight of "threats", "lifegones" and "father-loves" slow the proceedings unduly.

As the man with the big decision to make Sean Hannaway is a less than imposing leader, while Morna Regan's Iphigenia is never satisfactorily colloquial. Stronger work comes from Donacha Crowley, whose gossipy old man ools the plot, and from Paula McFetridge, as the formidable but best Clytemnestra.

Gary McCann's riveted steel set thrusting into the auditorium provides interesting spaces in which the cast can dance, crawl and thrash in despair. Paul O'Neill's lighting gives the huge structure the woody fluidity of a land in flux.

LUKE CLANCY

CHRIS PARKER

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■ POP OPINION
XTC's time has come

Meanwhile, back in Swindon ...

Tied into a punitive contract with Virgin, XTC went on strike for six years. They downed tools — in their case, pastoral psychedelia, punchy, jungle-green pop and a pagan shtetl English mores — in 1993, and haven't released a note since. Their leader, the lugubrious Andy Partridge, retreated to his terraced house in Swindon, built through an arduous divorce, built a studio in the shed at the end of his garden and started working on an album that he thought would never see the light of day.

"The more cack got thrown at us — the more the blinding scumstom of negativity came our way — the more I wrote. The more acid gets poured on my motor, the more volts my battery has," Partridge says. He's balanced on the edge of his piano stool in his extraordinary parlour — the room is crammed with toy forts, wood-block etchings, dried herbs and native pictures of huge fat farmyard pigs. It looks exactly as you'd expect the lead singer of XTC's home to look. He is, after all, one of the great British pop eccentrics.

"Some people would chew off their limbs to have these songs," he continues, correctly. "But I'm left with this longing for blemish. I need to murder those who influenced me. There are some big ghosts I still can't get rid of." He takes a sip of his almond tea. "Ray Davies just will not get out of my house. I have to kill Ray. I have to bludgeon Brian Wilson to death. If not kill, I certainly have to squeeze Burt Bacharach by the nuts.

"McCartney, I want to reduce to soya mince; and Lennon — well, unfortunately, someone's already done the job for me with Lennon.

"Apparently," he says, twinkling over his specs, "there's a fellow on the Internet who claims I killed Lennon."

Having inspired a whole generation of Britpop artists — Blur, in particular, were up to

Andy Partridge has called off XTC's six-year strike, Caitlin Moran reports

their neck in debt to XTC during their *Parlkife* days — Partridge and Co were finally released from their Virgin contract in 1995, and *Apple Venus Volume 1*, their first album in seven years, is out this week. And it's a stunner: XTC are still at least five years ahead of once again.

"I just want to outdo all these people who caused me to become trapped in this weird ideas world where all my ideas want to come out in music. It was never this way when I was a child. I didn't know whether I wanted to be an architect or a kite-maker or a bullet-biter or a painter. I just felt like an ideas person. But now I feel like I'm on these hot rails to Hades, where the orifice I've grown is a songwriting orifice that won't heat over."

Partridge was ten when the Beatles came along; and, as with every other member of his generation, his DNA was instantly altered. "I was there in my duvet coat and my shorts, thinking, 'Shall I scream? Girls scream. Some of the boys are screaming. Oh God, I don't know whether boys are supposed to scream at other boys or not.'" He settled for "grinding my knees together earnestly". He cultivated a Brian Wilson pudding-bowl haircut which, to preserve its geometry, he would cup in his hands as he slept.

"I just think everything to do with music is magic," he beams, twirling round and round on his piano stool. "And that was the awful thing about the whole Virgin strike. It wasn't so much the money. But it was the awful silence that got to me — that they'd stopped me from casting my spells on people. As long as I can be Merlin, I'm happy."

• *Apple Venus Volume 1* is out now on Cooking Vinyl



Andy Partridge: "I have to murder my influences"

ARTS



Straight outta Cwmaman: After 11 months on the road, Stereophonics are glad to get home to mid-Glamorgan — "It's cheaper than therapy"

Pride of our valley

Stereophonics are the great Welsh hope of Brit rock. But, Paul Sexton asks, can they win over America?

Last week's Grammy Awards were a merciless indictment of the enfeebled powers of British popular music as seen through American eyes. On a night at which the Brits were in the sort of form we showed at the Boston Tea Party, only a few of our senior rock citizens such as Eric Clapton and Page & Plant rescued us from total whitewash, and it was up to young whippersnappers like Elvis Costello to represent our youth policy.

Twisting the knife still deeper, the current issue of *Billboard* magazine trumpets the countrywide revival of that old devil called rock as a viable force on the American scene. The story celebrates the big numbers now being returned on the *Billboard* 200 album chart by such bright young guitar-bearers as Goo Goo Dolls, Creed, Limp Bizkit and Everclear, as well as genre staples like Metallica, Hole and Korn.

Nary a Brit among them, and the tale on American rock radio is almost as grim. For even a whiff of respectability on *Billboard's* Modern Rock Tracks airplay chart, we have to grasp at the shirt-tails of such acts as Garbage and Placebo, who are not so much Brits as, well, Brit-ish. The only glimmer of hope seems to come in the superior grooves of Fatboy Slim and the technorock stylings of V2 label newcomers Tin Star, now gracing playlists with their song *Head*.

But among those British outfits that know one end of an axe from another, the one that

seems ideally suited to a transatlantic crossing must be Stereophonics. Also signed to V2, the trio from Cwmaman in South Wales have risen through the domestic ranks with inexorable purpose in the past two years, bringing a ravenous individualism to a guitar-bass-drums configuration that many thought was going down for the third time.

This week,

the band trudged their latest Top Five hit, *Just Looking*, outstelling Cher in the process and neatly teeing up next week's release of an assured second album, *Performance and Cocktails*, that looks set for an unlikely head-to-head with boybooxin' Britney Spears for British chart supremacy.

The album

consolidates the

premier division place they audaciously snatched with its predecessor, 1997's *Word Gets Around*, which has now clocked an aggregate of almost a year among our bestsellers. After a 1998 Best British Newcomer going at the Brits and a mighty performance in front of 10,000 fans at Cardiff Castle last summer, Stereophonics last week booked an even grander day out, at Swansea's Morfa Stadium in July, and promptly sold 20,000 tickets in four days.

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shows. We played the Viper

Room in LA,

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and Boston were really

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We'll put in the effort if it will."

From a Welsh village to the

American heartland would be

another giant leap for Stereophonics, but there have been many of those since the trio became playground friends. Jones and Stuart Cable, the drummer, played together in bands even as pre-teens, adding bassist Richard Jones (no relation) and serving the statutory sentence grinding out covers in working men's clubs.

"I was 12, Stuart was 15 or

16, there were five of us in the

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"Because my old man was

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THE TIMES FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

■ NEW POP ALBUMS

Kula Shaker revitalised

NEW ALBUMS: David Sinclair on Kula Shaker's second album; plus, right, Nigel Williamson sees them in action

Karmic wheel of cool

KULA SHAKER
Peasants, Pigs & Astronauts
(Columbia SHAKER2CD £15.99)

HAVING emerged from the shaky aftermath of their million-selling debut album, *K*, with a renewed sense of purpose, Kula Shaker return to the fray with *Peasants, Pigs & Astronauts*, an album which should surely lift them above the "Is it real or is it retro?" debate. Even those who derided the band's use of Indian instruments and Sanskrit lyrics may be surprised at how well those influences have been incorporated on tracks such as *Namaste Nanda-nandana* and *Radhe Radhe*, the latter sung by guest vocalist Gouri Choudhury against a joyful combination of Krishna-like chanting and mambo horns.

On the minus side, Crispian Mills does not exactly help the band's cause with lyrics that are once again freighted with all sorts of cosmic mumbo-jumbo. "You're a wizard in a blizzard," he yelps meaninglessly in *Mystical Machine Gun*, while in *Great Hosannah* he raves about prophets rising to greet "a new world".

But this is still an impressive effort, and tracks such as *SOS*, *108 Battles* and *Sound of Drums* bristle with a self-confident energy that renders them impervious to complaints from those who think they have heard it all before.

VAN MORRISON
Back On Top
(Pointblank/Virgin VPBCD30 £15.99)

THERE IS only a thin line between an average Van Morrison album and one where his genius truly sparkles. The fa-

miliar ingredients are always there: the gruff voice, the gorgeous horn parts, the lyrics as evocative as mottled sunlight on an autumn day. But in keeping with its bullish title, *Back On Top* offers something more, making it Morrison's most engaging album since *Dogs Like These* in 1993.

It begins with *Goin' Down Geneva*, a sublimely casual, 12-bar blues that sets a rougher tone than that of his recent work. Along with a buoyant piano break by Geraint Watkins, the number boasts the first full-blooded guitar solo (from Mick Green) on a Morrison album in recent memory.

From there the singer, aided throughout by the superb harmonies of Brian Kennedy, proceeds down a familiar route, but with a distinct spring in his step. "What do you do when you get to the top and there's nowhere to go?" he ponders on the title track, a question which seems redundant in the context of such a superlative, minor-key shuffle as this.

If Morrison seems to be treading water on one or two of the slower numbers, the level of commitment in the per-

formances never falters. And when he strikes out on the melancholy narrative of *High Summer* and the swinging, Sam Cooke-influenced *Precious Time*, the mirth flashes as brightly as it ever has.

BRITNEY SPEARS
Baby One More Time
(Fever 0622172 £15.99)

IT IS easy to snigger at all that "girl power" rhetoric which the Spice Girls brought to pop, but at least with groups such as them and All Saints you feel as if the singers are calling the shots in their songs.

With American teen phenomenon Britney Spears, whose debut album has been written for her, Tim Pan Alley-



The comeback kids: Kula Shaker have shrugged off accusations of cultural opportunism and retro obsessions on *Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts*

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style, by various bespoke pop songwriters, there is a return to the formulaic R&B melodies and supine sentiments of a previous generation. "I don't know how to live without your love," she sings on *Born to Make You Happy*, while

much of the undoubted melodrama of the title track depends on the repeated injunction to "Hit me", diplomatically concealed by the three little dots in the title.

Still, by hanging on for a second week at the top of the str-

inges chart, Spears has brought a welcome sense of perspective to Blur's perfectly pleasant new record, which could only manage a berth at No 2.

SHAWN MULLINS
Soul's Core
(SMG/Columbia CK 69637 £15.99)

THESE days it is an amazing feat to get an artist like Shawn Mullins off the ground in this country. But with his current single, *Lullabye*, in the Top

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

Mystical musical mash

Kula Shaker took over the tiny basement at the 100 Club in Oxford Street for the first of three club dates in advance of their full British tour. Three years ago the band's debut album, *K*, unveiled a heady, patchouli-laden mix of 1960s psychedelic pop that sounded as if the Beatles were still hanging out with the Maharishi and Syd Barrett had never left Pink Floyd. It appealed to old hippies and young ravers alike, entered the album chart at No 1 and won a Brit award. The band's leader, Crispian Mills, immediately became a media darling, fêted not least because of his theatrical connections as the son of Hayley Mills and grandson of Sir John Mills.

Yet the backlash was swift. Mills did himself no favours with some ill-advised comments ("Hitler knew a lot more than he made out") and suddenly the band were receiving the cold shoulder, widely denounced as phoney purveyors of pseudo-mystical mumbo-jumbo. So their second album, *Peasants, Pigs & Astronauts* (see review, left) finds them at a crunch point in their short career.

On this showing they remain stuck steadfastly in some rose-tinted vision of the 1960s hippie idyll. To their fans they are cosmic visionaries, to their detractors merely sad, middle-class copycats and this tour is not going to change minds either way. The material from the new album, such as *SOS* and *Mystical Machine Gun*, was washed in the same psychological primary colours as the hit singles from the first album, *Hey Dude* and *Govinda*.

What saves the band from mere pastiche is Mills, who was a charismatic showman, despite some incomprehensible ranting about the significance of it being a full moon.

Apparently he likes to consult his astrological chart before making a move. On this night, at least, the stars must have been twinkling benignly.

ARTS

■ TOMORROW

Top gigs listed in Metro

Flying a funky flag

JAZZ ALBUMS

LENNY WHITE
Edge
(Hip Hop HIBD 8019) IF drummer Lenny White's mission is to prove that funk can embrace as rich a variety of rhythms, sounds and textures as its snooty cousin jazz, he succeeds triumphantly on this immediately appealing yet subtly crafted album. The opening track, *Raiders in the Temple of Boom*, sounds like an escape from a late Miles Davis album, while the treacly bass-clarinet of Bennie Maupin recalls *Bitches Brew*.

Led Zeppelin's *Kashmir* is intriguingly filtered through a Sly Stone-like arrangement; rap fusion, and even the odd scrap of straight-ahead jazz are also thrown into the mix, plus samples of everything from Bulgarian choirs to African traditional music.

With a stellar band — Patrice Rushen, Foley McCreary, Victor Bailey and Danny

Last of the soul brokers

Malaco Records, from Jackson, Mississippi, is one of the last of the independent record companies that have helped to shape America's musical tastes. It has kept its independence not by chasing pop glory — only three of its records have ever made the American Top Ten — but by concentrating on the market it knows best: contemporary Southern rhythm and blues, soul and gospel.

The six-CD box set *The Last Soul Company* (Malaco MCD30) celebrates the work of the company which "makes black music for black people". The label enjoyed its first big success in 1970 with an infectious dance record called *Groove Me*, by New Orleans singer King Floyd. That was followed by another dance smash, Jean Knight's *Mr Big Stuff*. Then, as the company grew, came country-influenced soul singers such as Dorothy Moore, established soul stars such as ZZ Hill and Ben-

CHRIS PARKER

Walsh are all involved — and White's meticulous production, this is a classy album that should appeal even to the hitherto funk-allergic.

TONY REMY'S BLUE

VIBE
Jammin' at the 12 Bar Club

(Altone ALT002)

EVER SINCE the mid-1980s, when guitarist Tony Remy was playing with Desperately Seeking Fusion, those impressed by the fluidity and vis-

ceral impact of his live sound have found it difficult, on the evidence of his records, to convince the sceptical that he is among Britain's most exciting soloists on any instrument. The release of these seven live bluesy jams should make their task a great deal easier.

Of the album's 70-plus minutes, more than an hour is devoted to Remy's inimitably inventive guitar, from blisteringly eloquent 12-bar blues to fierce, punchy funk, bringing to mind not only rock icons such as Hendrix but also later, jazzier players such as Mike Stern and John Scofield. With support from drummer Pete Lewinson and a selection of bassists, plus the occasional sweetly agile solo from saxophonist Jean Toussaint, this is, in Remy's words, his chance to "get up and wail, and worry about it next time round".

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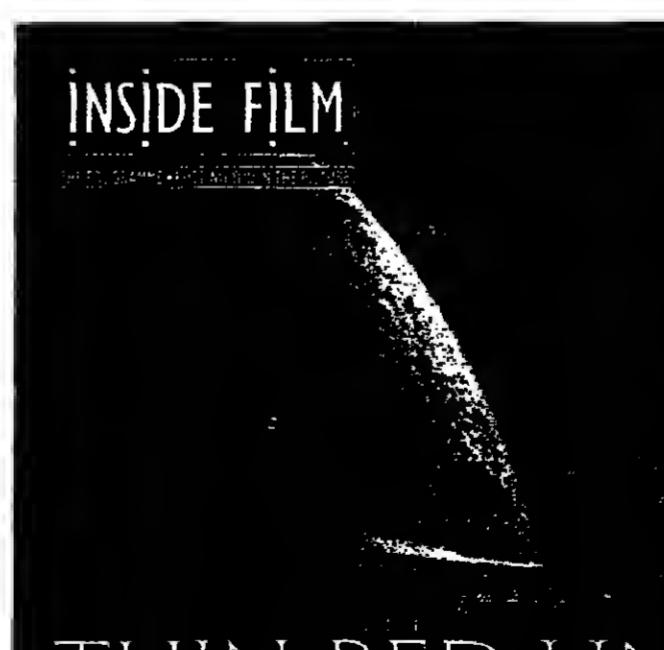
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FREE INSIDERS' GUIDE TO THE THIN RED LINE



REE inside your *Times* today you will find *Inside Film*, a programme for *The Thin Red Line*. *Inside Film* is handed out at no extra charge when you go to the cinema. It contains actor and crew biographies, stories about the making of the film, anecdotes that bring the film to life and inside information which readers who have just watched the film will enjoy. If you have not yet seen Terrence Malick's masterpiece, *Inside Film* will prepare you to witness one of the fiercest confrontations of the century, between Japanese and American soldiers, the battle of Guadalcanal Island.

FREE IN THE TIMES TODAY

CHANGING TIMES

JOHN CLARKE

FT's German challenge

Germany's press faces a shake-up, with the launch of a new business daily. Report by Sigrid Aufsterbeck

With the *Financial Times* about to enter the German marketplace, business publications there are bracing for a shake-up. The *FT* this week announced plans to launch a German-language business and financial daily in partnership with *Gruner+Jahr*, the newspaper and magazine wing of Bertelsmann.

The £60-million joint-venture company is working under the banner "Facts & Figures GmbH" until a date for the paper is agreed. Andrew Gowers, deputy editor of the *FT* in London, is editorial director of the new company, with Michael Rzeszutek of G+J in charge of marketing and management.

The "German *FT*" — the launch is expected late this year — will print on the characteristic salmon-coloured paper and a comprehensive online version will be available. An editorial team of about 100 — mostly based in Hamburg — will produce the paper, with access to articles from the *FT*'s global network of correspondents. The sales target is 150,000, the break-even schedule is three years.

It is an ambitious project: the first new daily to enter the German market for 20 years will challenge two heavyweights: *Handelsblatt* and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. The former is Germany's monopolistic business daily with sales of 160,000; the Frankfurt paper is a national daily boasting authoritative business and finance sections which sell 400,000 copies.

Both papers are gearing up for the imminent circulation battle. *Frankfurter* — based in euroland's financial centre — launched an extra finance section in January and



Fistful of deutschmarks: the *Financial Times* hopes to carve a niche for itself in a German market that boasts £2.3 billion in advertising revenue

introduced an *FT*-style Lex column. Its financial expertise received a boost when staff from its now defunct stablemate, *Blick durch die Wirtschaft*, were incorporated into *Frankfurter* last year.

Handelsblatt is now recruiting to bolster its editorial team of 175, fearing that the new *FT* may poach its staff. The paper has improved its layout and introduced features and analysis pages as well as devoting more space to personal finance.

Gowers believes that there is enough room in the rapidly growing business media market for all three publications: "This market is growing faster than the papers."

The *FT* strategy is to find a niche by combining "the authority of traditional German newspapers with the investigative and story-breaking culture of German business magazines". The German dailies

suffer from the perception that they are dull and act as obedient vehicles for the reporting of corporate success, leaving critique and scoops to the magazines. Ironically, as the German corporate world has become increasingly multinational, business journalists covering this changing landscape have remained insular: all titles are in German hands, mostly addressing a German readership.

Business and financial journalism has boomed in the past few years. Previously, Germans had shown little interest in personal finance — only this decade did they start to plunder their savings accounts and shift to more modern forms of investment. First to take advantage of this were the magazines. New titles such as *Börse Online* and *Impulse* were launched, while existing titles such as *Capital*, *Wirtschaftswoche* and *Manager Magazin* flourished.

The newspaper market was different: there were no new players but all the dailies — notably *Die Welt* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* — upgraded their business coverage because it was this section that was pulling in the largest advertising revenue. In 1998, the national dailies increased their advertising revenue by 11.8 per cent, according to the association of German newspaper publishers. It is not surprising that Pearson, which owns the *FT*, is eyeing a share of this DM6.9 billion (£2.34 billion) in revenue.

The European edition of the *FT*, printed in Frankfurt since 1979, has seen its sales climb to 22,000 in Germany, but further large gains seem unlikely as Germans remain reluctant to read English.

In G+J, the *FT* group has found an ambitious partner: it already owns the business magazines *Capital*, *Impulse* and *Börse Online*. G+J's interest in joining forces with the *FT* is no doubt heightened by the fact that it has no major daily in its stable — its revamp of *Berliner Zeitung* has yet to enjoy success.

Andrew Gowers will relish the challenge on his hands. After a successful year as acting editor of the *FT* while Richard Lambert was in America, he found little appeal in retreating from the front line.

But already some German analysts are pointing to a possible weak link. "Gowers will find it difficult to hire enough talented journalists," says Peter Turi, Editor of *Kress-Report*, a media gossip publication. Gowers is headhunting writers but he has yet to reveal any "big names" — writers who would serve to attract further quality personnel.

BT lines up a new image

THERE has been much posturing in adland over the past two weeks as to which agency has won what accounts in the great BT pitch bonanza. Newspaper business sections have bandied about fantastic spend figures with scant regard to the truth, common sense, competitor activity or basic mathematics.

However, with this week's award of the £5 million youth advertising account to Labour's favourite trendy advertising cooperative, St Luke's, BT's new line-up of agencies is complete.

Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO, Britain's largest agency, had the most to lose, holding most of the account over the past three years. BT went into the pitch intending to spread a workload that had become onerous for any one agency to handle — least of all profitably. Abbott Mead retained the most significant chunk of the business, the £60 million domestic consumer account. This includes call stimulation, the task that over the past two decades has brought us Beanie and Bob Hoskins.

As we know, the "it's good to talk" ads are set to disappear after five years, as that task (getting people, particularly men, to use the phone more and for longer) appears to have been met.

Today, the first problem is how to reverse BT's long-term decline in market share in the face of competition from cable operators.

M & C Saatchi, Maurice Saatchi's agency, emerged as the primary beneficiary of the review process. It won the £10 million business-to-business communications account with a brief that involves promoting BT as more than a supplier of telephone

ny, but as a business partner in the digital age. The win is a coup for M & C Saatchi. And it's vital to BT's management that this campaign succeeds: Business-to-business is about corporate confidence, shrugging off an old-fashioned image and, almost as important, cracking the insecurity of BT's management.

The rest of the line-up is completed by St Luke's, and Annmarie Puris Lintas, which has been taken on for special projects.

The first new Abbott Mead campaign is expected next month. BT has a good advertising track record. There is no reason to suggest that this will change given the quality of agency line-up.

■ NEWS this week of Adam Lury's retirement from advertising at the age of 42 has given many pause for thought.

Lury is one of the five co-founders of HHCL & Partners, the agency born in 1987 that went on to be the most controversial, pretentious, clever and hyped of the 1990s. As planning director, Lury was the brain behind such campaigns as the launch of First Direct bank, the turnaround of Britvic's Tango brand and the repositioning of the AA as the "fourth emergency service".

Lury's belief that the conventions by which advertising was created could be challenged to allow clients more access is now almost universal industry practice. His championing of strategic media buying, and his belief that advertising did not have to patronise the consumer, have also been greatly influential. He will be missed.

• Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Campaign.

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3T lines up new image



Sir Paul Condon managed to keep his job, to the unspoken relief of the Yard press office, despite the furore arising from the Stephen Lawrence report

Spinning a thin blue line?

As the Stephen Lawrence report finally slips down Fleet Street's news schedules, Scotland Yard press officers are breathing a sigh of relief. The Met has been badly bruised but Sir Paul Condon is still in charge. The damage could have been much worse.

Organising press relations for Britain's 54 police forces and national squads must often seem like occupying that proverbial spot between a rock and a hard place. "The journalists think we are holding back. The police think we are too close to reporters," sighed one senior press officer this week. The role of police press officers has recently come under increasing scrutiny. Journalists complain that it is often hard to obtain information and that responses to queries are slow. Press officers argue that they are constrained by the nature of police work. But Scotland Yard has nonetheless increased its emphasis on press relations, now, a 70-strong department with 30 press officers and an annual budget of £6 million. National-

ly, no force is without its media unit, and responsibility for them has gradually passed from senior police officers to media managers.

The units offer a daily diet of crime stories and traffic accidents for newspapers, radio stations and television: The greatest focus of media attention is the Yard, which handles about 25,000 calls each year to its 24-hour press bureau. Yet in many county forces, press offices are less responsive to media demands. They close at 5pm, and press officers are rarely contactable at night or at weekends.

Such reluctance to maintain the flow of information reflects a longstanding paranoia about the press among police — although Dick Fedorco, the head of the Met's press and publicity operation, argues that other organisations are equally cautious. He advocates a better rapport between the press and press officers but ad-

mits that even in the Met, only about a third of officers are comfortable with the media.

The idea of openness towards the media also sits uneasily with the view of many modern 'chief' constables versed in the latest management theories that dictate that forces should speak with one corporate voice to the press, as commercial companies do.

In recent years, forces including the Yard have tried to tighten their control on information — not always successfully, since most crime reporters operate by using personal contacts. The Yard has also been accused of using the drive against corruption to curtail such contacts — a charge it stoutly denies.

According to Chester Stern, the president of the Crime Reporters' Association, trying to gag officers will encourage rather than halt corruption.

He says that tighter controls encourage an underground market for information funded by less scrupulous newspapers.

Last year, for example, there were reports that £35,000 was being offered for a picture of a particular notorious paedophile in a police cell.

Meanwhile, police press officers face the prospect of further restrictions arising from the legal constraints on information concerning a crime.

For example, forces are currently split over when to identify suspects who have been charged. The Yard identifies any suspect as soon as his or her name is on the charge sheet. Other forces refuse to do so until the suspect is in court.

Fresh restrictions on basic information are also on the horizon. For instance, new European legislation could prevent officers from releasing details of accident victims.

Until a few years ago, forces briefed reporters about cases

under an embargo, so that the latter could write background articles in preparation for convictions. But defence lawyers claimed there was a risk of contempt of court, and almost all forces now refuse to brief journalists about a case until the jury has gone out.

Despite such increasing legal levers, chief constables still agree that for better or worse, they must live with the press and improve relations — although there is now at least one alternative which is cheap and offers links to the public unfiltered by journalists.

US forces make wide use of the Internet, and British forces are showing increasing interest. The Yard's site now draws 40,000 people a month. And the largest single entry? The Lawrence report, of course.

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SUNDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 1999

Facing the Net threat

When I first knew Greg Hadfield he was a young reporter on *The Western Morning News*, fresh from Oxford, with obvious talent and a baby son who was a computer freak when he was just out of nappies. Fifteen years later, Hadfield and Tom, that baby son, run the world's most popular football website, *SoccerNet*, and Hadfield also owns Schools-Net, a virtual school on the Web.

Four years ago, when he was 11, Tom started a Saturday night soccer results website from his home in Brighton. Now it is owned by the *Daily Mail* and is one of the world's top 50 websites. He will be a millionaire before he leaves university. Success and fortune couldn't come to a nicer family and the exhilarating story of the Hadfields should be studied by every editor who worries about the "threat" from the Net.

That worry surfaced this week when a colleague on the sports desk, who had suddenly realised that football fans could get reports of matches on the Net within an hour of the final whistle, asked why any of them should bother to buy a Sunday or Monday newspaper.

By 7pm on Saturday nights *SoccerNet* is running *Mail on Sunday* match reports, and there are also reports on individual club websites. On Wednesday night about 100,000 Manchester United fans around the world got a 1,700-word running commentary on *SoccerNet*, as well as the results of the other European matches. Yesterday it was receiving 300 votes an hour on who would win the Champions League. Why bother going to a newspaper Internet site for sport?

With the Internet, says *Observer* columnist John Naughton, "none of us has any clue where it is headed. None of the newspaper Internet gurus would quarrel with that assessment. What they do believe, sincerely, is that newspapers have got to be astute the rocket.

Hadfield, who worked on *Today*, *The Sunday Times*, *Daily Mail* and *Sunday Express* and loves newspapers, has been depressed by the Little Englanders lack of enterprise shown by British newspaper groups. They have been so reluctant to embrace new media that they have missed an opportunity to become global players. They will soon be exposed to American conglomerates who will be

parking their tanks in Britain, he believes.

That British conservatism is shown in the vivid contrast between the Internet editions of British and American newspapers. Each British newspaper, moreover, has opted for a different strategy. The Internet edition of *The Times* reproduces the total newspaper, but is developing micro sites; *Guardian Unlimited* consists of micro sites with live news; *Electronic Telegraph* is a mix of the two.

Brian MacArthur

Each is successful, with 1.8 million registered users of *The Times*, more than a million regular users of the *Telegraph*, and 200,000 registrations within two months for *The Guardian*.

Americans, by contrast, are producing dedicated Net newspapers. The *Wall Street Journal* has 60 reporters worldwide working 24 hours a day for its constantly updated *Interactive Journal*. It can be set up to deliver a personal profile of news and quotes and has separate entrances for America, Asia and Europe (wsj.com). On *The New York Times* site, news is updated every ten minutes. It offers a 365-day archive, a free library of 50,000 book reviews and exclusive Web reports on books and technology (nytimes.com).

Any first-rate daily newspaper without its own first-rate newswire would eventually

ally have to buy or build one. Peter Kann, the chairman of Dow Jones, which owns the *Journal*, gave warning this week: "Otherwise newspapers, which are so distinctive every morning, will, on the Internet, become the same wire copy by the end of the day. That's the case with many newspapers on the Web today, which are the *Daily Bugle* by morning and the *Associated Press* by night."

Hadfield would agree with the drift of Mr Kann's comments. New media in Britain, he says, is often led either by staff who know something about new media but nothing about journalism, or by journalists who are ignorant of new media — and sometimes by technicians who know nothing about journalism at all. Defensive strategies intended to ring-fence the British market won't work because they won't make money.

Is Hadfield too pessimistic? John Naughton's iron law is that we always over-estimate the long-term impact of new technologies — and my own experience with *Today* in 1985-86 suggests that newspapers using new media can try to fly too high, too soon. British newspapers may be right to make haste slowly.

Internet editions are capturing young, promiscuous or overseas readers who don't or cannot buy newspapers and are establishing the attraction of a brand. By starting to publish Web links from important news stories, *The Times* becomes a search engine to the wealth of information on the Net. E-mail addresses at the end of columns have proved a remarkable success: after their recent column on the euro in *The Times*, Mary Ann Sieghart and Anatole Kaletsky have been swamped with up to a hundred e-mails.

Few editors are complacent about the Net, but most also believe in Naughton's iron law. So, as the world explodes with information, they argue that newspapers must act as sieves, selecting the blend of information and entertainment that suits their brand. Newspapers and the Net can coexist. Yes, they might say, you can read *Mail on Sunday* match reports on *SoccerNet* on Saturday nights, but *Mail on Sunday* sales are still up 43,000 on a year ago.

• brian.macarthur@the-times.co.uk



On the ball: SoccerNet on Wednesday

News at Ten hangs on to its good name

WHY is ITN so determined to prevent Sky News using the title *News at Ten*? Answer: it wants to start a 24-hour news channel soon and could then resurrect its most famous brand.

The biggest applause at its wake on Wednesday came when Sir David Nicholas, former ITN editor, said: "I can't find it in my heart to cheer the end of *News at Ten*." Just as well the party was shunned (in favour of football) by the executives who wielded the knife. Meanwhile, ponder this: 6.9 million tuned in for *News at Ten*'s Uganda murders reports.

■ HUGE sighs of relief among British comedy makers. ITV's desperate attempt to revive the genre, by asking top US experts Carsey Werner to make *Days Like These* for it in Britain, has produced another flop. The kind of paper Preston ran. Working on *The Guardian* as I did in the 1980s was a dispiriting experience for anyone who wasn't male and Oxford too. Shanya Pereira, one of Preston's three, who had two stints trying to further herself before exiting in defeat in 1989, says: "As a black woman I was unskilled at playing the white, male Oxford game, and they were certainly not queuing up to give me the rules." For a liberal paper, it seemed odd.

■ LAST week I wrote that ITV's drama reconstruction of the Stephen Lawrence murder performed poorly because it was broadcast a week too early. David Liddiment, ITV's director of programmes, says it was meant to coincide with the publication of the report but that came out later than expected. It was not a victim of a mache male scheduling game. But it illustrates how carefully crafted programmes can fail to make an impact, through simple scheduling mistakes.

• maggiebrown.media@btinternet.com



MAGGIE BROWN'S MEDIA DIARY

Unfunny: the sitcom, *Days Like This*, has flopped

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

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David Starkey



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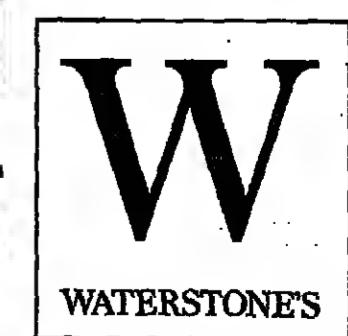


Michio Kaku

Four distinguished contributors to The Sunday Times Chronicle of the Future, David Starkey, the historian and broadcaster, Susan Greenfield, director of the Royal Institution, Robert Winston, the in-vitro fertilisation pioneer, and Michio Kaku, the author of *Visions*, will take part in a debate on how science and society will change our lives in the next 50 years. Will we become a race of super-beings, genetically enhanced and intellectually superior? At a time of political upheaval could England emerge as a super-state?

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CHANGING TIMES

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A crisp approach to cable

Raymond Snoddy talks to Tony Illsey, the salted snacks man who turned telecoms evangelist

These days, when you ring the headquarters of Telewest, one of the big three cable companies, an extraordinary thing happens. The call is answered quickly.

Cable companies, such as Telewest, have had a terrible reputation in the past for the service they have provided. "Just six months ago we were answering only 74 per cent of all calls received, and of those only 64 per cent were answered within 30 seconds," says Tony Illsey, who came from running Walkers Crisps, a company that has won most of the marketing prizes going, to be chief executive of Telewest. He was the first executive with top-notch marketing experience to take charge of a cable company. "Last month our total calls answered were well into 90 per cent, of which 82 per cent were answered within 30 seconds," he says.

The transformation was achieved by focusing senior managers on the issue at a meeting every Tuesday when they knew the call numbers would be reviewed. "The whole team know their first priority is to make sure that they are not going to be embarrassed during that meeting," says Illsey, who often rings the

call centres pretending to be a member of the public. Apart from "crunching together" Telewest with General Cable and Birmingham Cable last year, Illsey says his priority has been to make basic things work.

There has been another change to the company during the chief executive's reign. When Illsey took over, his mother spent £200 on Telewest shares at 130p. The first shares she had ever bought. They now stand at 270p.

The difference is not entirely due to Mrs Illsey's son. The surge in the share of the telecommunications sector has pulled shares of cable companies up with them. Illsey has also taken over at a time when cable is being taken more seriously and the balance of power between the industry and its satellite rival BSkyB has been shifting its way.

Five years ago, satellite dishes outnumbered cable connections by three to one. There were 2.5 million dishes against 800,000 cable TV subscriptions. By the end of last year, cable had added two million homes while satellite had added only one million.

Illsey, who can tell where anyone was brought up by the brand of crisps they eat, has high hopes



Cable boss Tony Illsey often rings Telewest call centres pretending to be a member of the public

that the gap will be further eroded by the company's "millennium package". For £12.99 a month subscribers get a telephone line and 14 television channels, including the five terrestrial ones, as well as Sky One, Eurosport, the Cartoon Network and Sky News.

The package is already successful in such areas as Newcastle, and in the next few months it will be introduced to the General Cable franchises in London and Slough, and at Birmingham Cable.

"It is the single biggest driver of the momentum now in the company," says Illsey, who became a management trainee with Colgate after doing a business degree.

He was five years in Japan for Pepsi, which he describes as life-changing. "I learnt the importance of having a vision for a business and communicating the hell out of it so that everyone knows exactly what it is about and what they have to do," he says.

The chief executive plans to introduce digital cable packages at the end of this year. The launch of SkyDigital and ONdigital, the

terrestrial service, have created, he believes, such awareness about pay television that cable will be able to take maximum advantage when it launches services such as fast Internet access.

Cable modems will, Illsey says, make the Internet available on impulse, just like television. Above all, cable will be able to offer a range of services now becoming commercially feasible, such as video-on-demand — the ability to choose from a library of hundreds of feature films.

In America last week Illsey saw another possible cable offering, an electronic book that can store up to ten books at a time from an Internet site. "Where a novel might take 15 minutes to download over a phone line, it will take 15 seconds with a cable modem," says Illsey. But that is a little way off yet. Before that is the battle to establish Telewest as the benchmark of customer service.

Wanted: heavy mettle PR

A RESOURCEFUL operator is being sought for one of the country's toughest PR assignments. PR Week reports that, after a run of poor publicity, the Diana Memorial Fund is bunting for its first in-house PR and communications head. Since it was established in September 1997, just after the Princess's death, the fund has been involved in rows over the high fees paid to its lawyers, the use of Diana's name on a low-fat spread and lottery scratch-card, and, most recently, the dismissal of Paul Morrell, the Princess's former butler. A PR practitioner describes the job as "a bit of a poisoned chalice".

■ THE Advertising Association has warned the Government against allowing the Food Standards Agency to censor advertising, says Campaign. The AA is worried that the agency will be hijacked by healthy-eating pressure groups bent on warning consumers off certain products. Unconvinced by assurances from Jeff Rooker, the minister responsible for food safety, the association is drawing up battle plans. "Commercial advertising is not a tool for social policy or social engineering," says Sara Price, the AA's head of public affairs.

■ THE BBC's first dedicated promotion for *EastEnders* will begin today. Marketing reports, with slots on all television and radio channels. The campaign has been master-minded by Maureen Duffy, who joined the BBC last year from J. Walter Thompson. It is part of an attempt to stem the drift of peak-time viewers from BBC1 to ITV, which could accelerate next week when *News at Ten* disappears.

■ ESTHER RANTZEN, keen to remain unmarred by the row over fake talk-show guests, has written to Broadcast, pointing out that her BBC2 programme has had no allegations made against it. She writes about "the positive good" achieved by tackling important subjects

through first-hand experiences. "We should recognise the strength and value of talk shows when they are well made," she says.

■ THE LAUNCH PAD: Associated Newspapers delays launch of free London daily *Metro* to March 15 and cuts print run from 350,000 to 100,000; EMAP's new weekly *Heat* hits 100,000 sales target (Marketing); Mirror Group abandons plan to relaunch *Sporting Life* (Campaign); *Maledia*, dedicated to women's writing, to launch on Monday; EMAP Elan plans new magazine edited by Sharon Ring, former editor of OK! (Press Gazette); Indefinite delay to launch of *Crime Weekly* by *Media Week*.

■ GETTING THE BUSINESS: J. Walter Thompson wins £15 million account for cable TV and telecoms firm NTL; Publicis to handle £3 million campaign for McVities; introducing *Jaffa Cakes* in a resealable tube; Lever Bros signs £1 million deal to sponsor ITV's *Stars in Their Eyes*.

■ PROMOTING RADIOL: washing powder (Marketing); Segi returns to former agency WCRS to launch new Dreamcast computer games console; Master Merriman Herring Levy wins £3 million account for Norwich Union investment fund; Fuji plans to appoint Wunderman Cato Johnson to £3 million account (Campaign).

■ CHANGING FACES: Andy Zonfrillo, broadcast director at Leo Burnett, to be TV buying director for MindShare; Gerry Roads quits as European marketing director for Del Monte (Marketing Week); Documentary-maker Paul Watson leaves Granada for United Productions (Broadcast); Bates Dorlands account executive Adam Leigh promoted to deputy managing director (Campaign); Giles Pearman from Unilever to be Classic FM's first dedicated marketing manager (Media Week).

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

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THE TIMES FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

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How much do they earn a year?



As the battle of the news bulletins begins, the presenters are being turned into stars with salaries to match, says Carol Midgley

Tonight, as Trevor McDonald utters his last "And finally...," and *News at Ten* is laid to rest, the pistol will sound for the fiercest ratings battle of 1999. Television news bulletins, once regarded as the dowdy sister of current-affairs programmes and documentaries, will take centre stage as executives fight tooth and nail for the teatime news viewer.

From Monday, the *Six O'Clock News* will be ambushed by ITV's spanking new *ITV Evening News* at 6.30pm. A week later Channel 5 will launch a more minor offensive by moving 5 News from 7pm to 6pm in the hope that the televisual *Kirsty Young* will lure viewers away from the BBC's Welsh anchorman Huw Edwards.

The *Nine O'Clock News* will remain much as it is, fronted by the heavyweights Peter Sissons and Michael Burke. But the industry will be watching keenly to see how many viewers ITN's new *ITV Nightly News* will draw in at the late hour of 11pm. ITV is hoping that the ratings will be helped by the fact that it is being presented by the rising stars of ITN: Dermot Murnaghan and Katie Derham.

The BBC is also nurturing a rising star, Huw Edwards, who was recently plucked from the obscurity of *News 24* to the heady heights of presenting the new *Six O'Clock News* this spring. The *Six O'Clock News* replaces *News 24* with the promise of a warmer, more informal bulletin with a dedicated "family" of specialists and reporters who, the BBC hopes, will soon become as familiar to viewers as their living-room furniture.

Executives at BBC news are irritated by the fact that other news programmes are now "crowding" around the hallowed spot of 6pm in the race for ratings. Their argument is that the viewer loses out as rival broadcasters limit the number of times a day that people can get news on terrestrial channels.

Only *Channel 4 News* appears to be keeping out of the battle. Despite a relaunch this year, rumoured to have cost £3 million, which has resulted in a multi-coloured studio and flashes of *Jon Snow's* socks as he sits behind a trendy, low-slung desk, it is staying at 7pm.

However, much more than ratings is at stake. Broadcasters want their news presenters, even their correspondents, to be stars. The successful newscaster of the future will be regarded as one who is recognised as readily as the mighty Trevor McDonald; their audience figures will be watched almost as keenly as the ratings for *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*.

As the value of newscasters rises in the modern age, so will their salaries. The pay of newscasters varies enormously, and usually reflects how many rival broadcasters have tried to poach them. *The Times* has conducted its own research into the current salaries of our leading newscasters, a notoriously secretive area.

We have been forced to rely on a number of unofficial briefings and anonymous sources, so apologies to those we may be under—or over—paying.

Fighting for the viewers

W

hatever else you plan to do this evening, try to spare the time to take part in a small piece of broadcasting history, by watching the very last edition of *News at Ten*.

The decision by the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to allow the ITV companies to move the news and change the schedule was controversial for a day or so.

But apart from the harumphings of a few newspaper columnists bemoaning the death of public service broadcasting as we know it, the life went out of the row remarkably quickly. There were no marches to save *News at Ten*, although those responsible for its success will doubtless shed a well-lubricated tear tonight when the last edition is over at 10.30pm.

A postscript to the debate has been supplied today by Sir David Nicholas, the former chief executive of Independent Television News, in a letter to *The Times*. Much to his irritation, he has found out that one of the influential voices in the 7-3 majority in favour of killing off *News at Ten* was that of his old friend and rival Sir Michael Checkland. Sir Michael, now a member of the ITC, is the former Director-General of the BBC.

The publicity surrounding the move is still a little difficult to stomach — even for a reluc-

tant supporter of the notion that television schedules cannot stay the same for ever. ITV couldn't quite manage to admit that the only point of the change is to show movies and dramas uninterrupted by the *News at Ten* and instead opted for bumbling, claiming that "ITV News is Getting Better" — as if that somehow was the motive.

From Monday, we will be able to judge for ourselves whether we are talking "better" or, much more likely, just commercial reality. What is certain is that the nature of the ratings battle for news is about to change in probably unpredictable ways.

On Wednesday, ITN had a audience of 12.4 million for its two evening programmes — 4.7 million at 5.40pm and 7.7 million at 10pm. The BBC was hardly behind its rival — with 12.2 million — but with the peaks reversed: the *Six O'Clock News* pulling in 6.6 million and the *Nine O'Clock News* 4.6 million.

The big battle will remain between ITV and BBC, although Sky News is trying to boost its ratings with a new

dedicated news programme, *Sky News at Ten O'Clock*, which launches on Monday.

The problem for ITN will be to hold on to anything like a 12.4 million news audience after the disappearance of its flagship. What if Trevor McDonald does really well at 6.30pm because he is a likeable chap and people know what he stands for, and adds two million viewers to ITV's teatime total — raising its figures to about 6.7 million? Dermot Murnaghan would do well to attract a three million-plus audience to the 11pm news. Which would mean, of course, that overall, ITV could lose 2.5 million viewers.

The new regime will take a while to settle down and ITV figures could be poor until viewers get used to the new schedules. When they do, ITV could emerge victorious at teatime, while the BBC could gain considerably with the *Nine O'Clock News*, which is being given a free run between the *Channel 4 News* at 7pm and the new 11pm news.

The nature of news agendas — as well as the impact of high-profile presenters — will

have a considerable influence on the battle for viewers. A tea-time agenda — domestic news with a popular touch — is likely to develop as a result of the bunching of bulletins around 6pm and 6.30pm. *Channel 5 News* is making its second move, this time to 6pm.

As a result, we might have to wait until 9pm or 11pm for serious news on the main channels. This offers an opportunity for the BBC with the *Nine* but, as usual, the Beeb seems to be taking a half-decent idea and treating it in too mechanistic a way. More foreign stories are fine, but on some evenings this week the top three stories have all been foreign — Uganda, Sierra Leone and Indonesia. By having too high a quota of foreign stories, the BBC could fail to take advantage of the opportunity presented on a plate by ITV.

■ Thanks are due to Lord Hussey of North Bradley, the former Chairman of the BBC, for implicitly backing my campaign, launched last week, to become Director-General of the BBC. In the Lords on Wednesday, he vigorously took up the attack on bloated policy units, overuse of management consultants and far too much money being spent on new digital channels. This is an entirely positive development. It is our licence fee money, after all.

For a FREE ticket, which admits two, collect five differently numbered tokens, attach them to the completed voucher right and present them at the cinema box office of your choice, from those listed below before March 13. Tickets will be issued on a first-come-first-served basis. *Waking Ned* opens nationwide on March 19.

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This week *The Times* has teamed up with 20th Century Fox to offer readers the chance to see an exclusive preview screening of *Waking Ned* on Sunday morning, March 14 (exact times will be on the ticket). The film, a raucous modern fairy tale, was a surprise hit at the Cannes Film Festival and won rave reviews when it opened in America at Christmas. Inspired by a true story, *Waking Ned* follows the comic exploits of two friends as they stumble into a lottery scam of hilarious proportions.

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EDUCATIONHow should
we tackle
poor teachers?

The incompetent teacher has become one of the bogeys of the Nineties, a stereotype to rival that of the long-suffering nurse and the untrustworthy politician — or journalist. Attention has centred on estimates of how many inadequate performers there are in British classrooms, rather than on how to identify them, let alone cope with the problem.

Parents who have had the misfortune to have a poor teacher in charge of their children will know that it is not always easy to pin down the shortcomings. A teacher may be uninspiring and lacklustre, but these are not sackable offences.

Too many glib statements about the defects of state schools assume that incompetence is not only rife, but obvious, and capable of only one remedy: dismissal. Two studies published today illustrate some of the complexities facing head teachers and those judged to be incompetent. The reports are part of a larger study being carried out at Exeter University's School of Education. Without excusing incompetence or pretending that it does not exist, they question the criteria used to judge teachers, and the response of many schools.

Professor Ted Wragg, who is leading the research, is famously sympathetic to teachers and sceptical about their critics.

His column in *The Times Educational Supplement* often lampoons ministers and inspectors for making what he regards as generalised and unsubstantiated allegations of incompetence.

Today's reports, however, ask important questions for pupils and parents, as well as teachers.

The research looks at the treatment of incompetence from the point of view of those accused and the head teachers who have to deal with the issue.

The sample — 654 heads and 70 self-selected teachers — though large, is not necessarily representative. But there are common threads running through both reports.

Not surprisingly, most of the teachers accused of incompetence felt misjudged. Their explanations ranged from medical problems affecting their

work to racial discrimination, bullying and conspiracy theories. However, fewer than one in ten of those who had completed a disciplinary procedure were deemed to have improved sufficiently to remain in their posts. Many left before matters reached that stage.

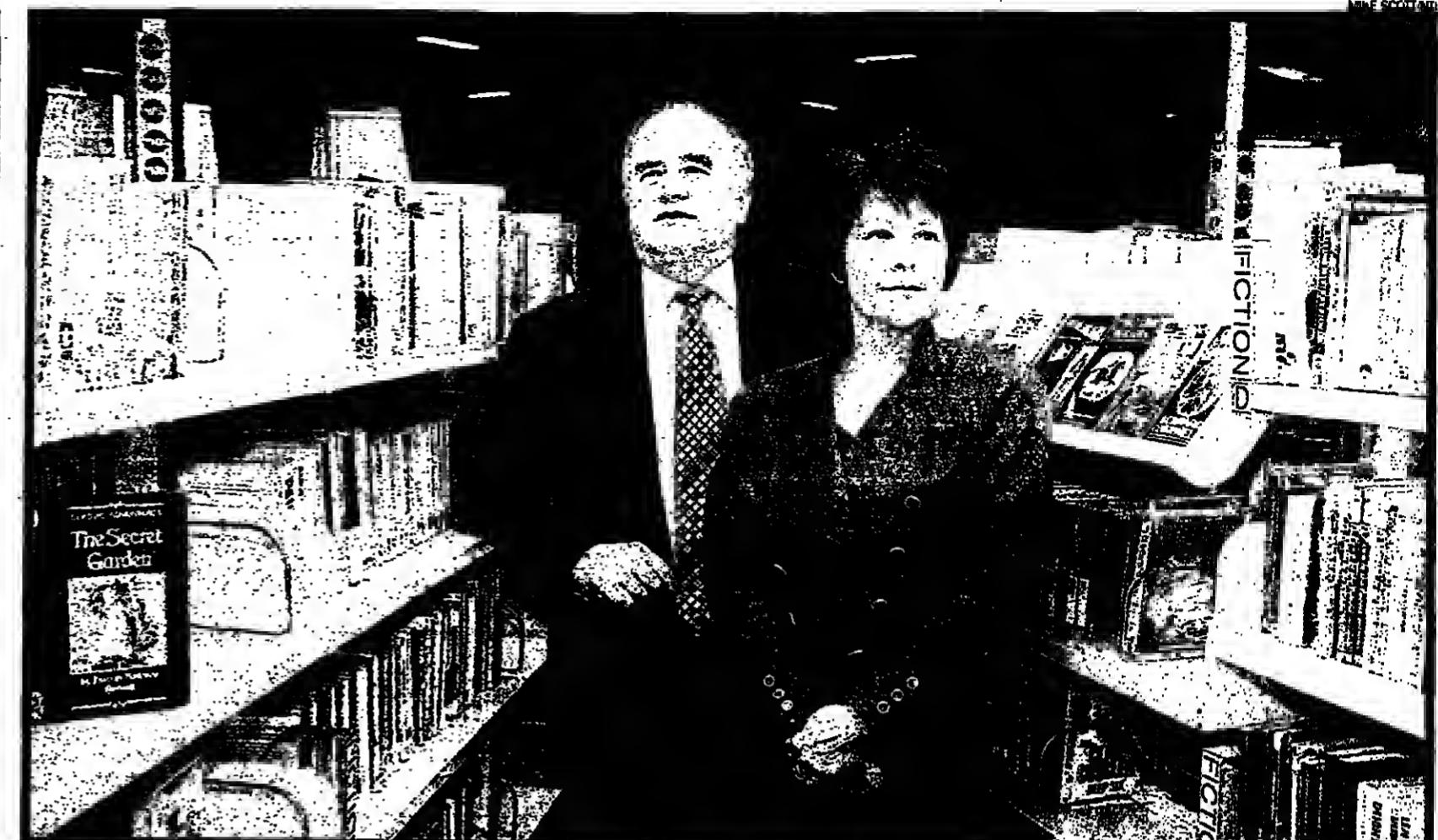
Yet 26 of the 44 teachers in completed cases are now back in the classroom, albeit often in part-time or occasional work. Some wish that they had challenged the original allegation more vigorously, taking their subsequent employment as vindication, but Professor Wragg's survey cannot show which verdict was correct. Because the allegations concerned key skills such as the maintenance of discipline, lesson planning and inadequate progress by pupils, there must be a suspicion that some at least are in the wrong job.

The head teachers' responses also raise concerns about the way allegations of incompetence are handled. Many admitted that they should have acted sooner and, with almost half of the cases taking more than a year to resolve, would have welcomed swifter resolution. Only a third had any relevant training and needed more advice on employment law. A quarter of the teachers tackled by the heads in the survey improved enough to stay on, the rest eventually resigning or taking early retirement. But only 13 per cent were considered to have developed into good teachers, while 42 per cent were "acceptable".

Perhaps the most worrying trait to emerge is the sheer inconsistency of schools' responses. More than a third of the teachers said their school had no formal monitoring of performance and no procedure to deal with allegations of incompetence. One in six of the heads admitted that there had been no predetermined procedure to follow.

So far, teaching competence has been seen purely in terms of black and white. Today's reports suggest that there are shades of grey, and that a more systematic approach is needed if under-achievers are to be helped to improve and the no-hoppers weeded out.

John
O'Leary



Educational entrepreneurs: Stanley Goodchild and Valerie Bragg "want to give pupils the opportunities to succeed... you have to give them some freedom and trust"

The school Swat team

A daunting task faces Stanley Goodchild and his wife Valerie Bragg as they prepare to turn around one of the worst state schools in England, but they are ready for the challenge. From September next year, 3E's Enterprises, the Birmingham company they manage, will run Kings Manor, a failing comprehensive in a rundown area of Guildford in Surrey.

Kings Manor was built to house 900 pupils, but student numbers have fallen to about 400 and, according to Ofsted, the school has dismal exam results, high absenteeism and exclusion, poor behaviour, low expectations, indifferent teaching and patchy leadership. However, Mr Goodchild and Ms Bragg, both 55, who have a strong record of saving failing schools and educating children from deprived backgrounds, are confident of success. Yet the dynamic educational entrepreneurs, who have generated millions of pounds in

commercial and industrial investment for their schools over the years, seem surprisingly self-effacing.

"If all goes to plan, Kings Manor is going to be oversubscribed a year or so after it reopens," Mr Goodchild says. "There is disbelief among some education folk in Guildford that anything is going to happen. It has been like that for 15 years, they say, 'why is it going to change now? Well, they are going to be surprised.'

Mr Goodchild may well be as good as his word. As a head teacher in the 1980s, he transformed Garth Hill, a run-down, vandal-ridden comprehensive in Bracknell, into one of the most technologically advanced schools in Europe. It became a forerunner of the Conservative Government's network of City Technology Colleges (CTCs), inner-city schools with curricula biased towards science, technology and mathematics.

Valerie Bragg, whom he married last year, also knows a thing or two about turning sows' ears into silk purses. In 1988 she became principal of Kingshurst, the first CTC, in an unprepossessing area of east Birmingham.

When she started, 83 per cent of students were leaving at 16. Now more than 90 per cent stay on and 40 per cent go on to university. The mystery, however, is precisely how they intend to turn Kings Manor around. It rapidly becomes apparent that few decisions have been made.

We know that the present school will close and its buildings will undergo a £1 million refurbishment in a conscious "re-branding" of the institution. It will re-

open next year as a voluntary-aided arts and technology college.

The couple will decide what steps to take only after talking to as many parents, teachers and others as possible. Mr Goodchild says there is no single table d'hôte answer for transforming a school's performance; rather one must choose from an à la carte menu.

While they may try to repeat some of the successful initiatives at Garth Hill (for example, school uniforms, discipline) and Kingshurst (the International Baccalaureate), they want to fashion their educational solutions to Kings Manor's precise needs.

Mr Goodchild adds that successful schools are "owned" by the community. "If you can create a school seen to evolve from the aspirations of the community," he says, "then it has a far better chance of survival or development. Everything is possible if parents share the vision of what the school will be like in future."

Ms Bragg says that there will probably be vocational, technological and arts education. She also expects that Kingshurst CTC and the Guildford college will pioneer new technologies such as video-conferencing to share teaching and expertise. It is hoped that it will develop strong links with businesses, hospitals and universities.

With the help of an advisory team, the couple will appoint the majority of the governors, a new head and staff. To some, the lack of an educational blueprint for Kings Manor might seem vaguely worrying. Ms

Bragg also talks in generalities. "It is not one thing," she says. "It involves raising the expectations of the students and making them believe that they can do it. To do that, you have got to give them some freedom and trust."

"You need a curriculum that excites, motivates and switches them on. And that curriculum will not be the same for every child. Too often children are forced to do things. I think you need to ask them what they want to do. It is a case of encouragement, praise and taking an interest, looking at their work."

"I mean, you have only to say to a child 'I am really impressed with what you are doing' to see them growing."

"It is also about involving the community — pupils, staff, everybody — in the vision. So what will actually emerge will be unique to Kings Manor."

3E's Enterprises, the commercial arm of Kingshurst CTC where Mr Goodchild is MD and Mrs Bragg a director, is being paid an undisclosed management fee until the day the college opens, after which payments will be related to performance targets, such as raising pupil numbers and improving exam results. Any future profits will be shared between Kings Manor and Kingshurst CTC.

The couple will not reap any financial benefit from the deal. "Let's face it," Ms Bragg said, "if we wanted to be rich we would have done something very different from education wouldn't we?"

So why are they doing it? "We believe passionately in education," she says. "I did not like school myself. I have this passion to make it enjoyable and interesting. We feel that too many children become switched off around the age of 12. They are undisciplined and in many cases regret it for the rest of their lives."

"What drives us is this feeling that we want to give pupils the opportunities to succeed."

Weighed down by books

French pupils suffer from a heavy workload. Adam Sage reports

Sébastien Rouquier staggered out of Lycée Michel on the outskirts of Paris looking like a backpacker in the Himalayas. His rucksack was bulging, his legs were bowed.

"Sometimes it can be worse than this," Sébastien, 17, said, putting, "Our parents spend about £150 a year on textbooks, which weigh us down and which we often don't use. All we get for the money is back problems."

His comment echoes the views of Claude Allègre, the French Education Minister, who has launched a national debate that is likely to revolutionise the relationship between classes and textbooks. "These books are too expensive and stuffed full of things that children don't need to know," he says.

Paul Landrieu, head of Collège Jean Moulin, in Perpignan in the South West, was among those who supported the minister. "Last year," he says, "we weighed our pupils with their bags and discovered that at the age of 11, they often carry between 10 and 14 kilos — 40 per cent of their own weight. Parents have been telling us for some time that their children are suffering health problems, such as back pain, as a result."

"The difficulty is that every-



Children carry 40 per cent of their own weight home each day

written word more important than the spoken word of the teacher. We have an almost religious attitude to the book."

This did not stop M. Landrieu ordering the dissection of textbooks for a class of 13-year-olds last term. The works were cut up and the pupils handed a few pages at a time, drastically reducing the average weight of their satchels.

The minister has also raised the problem of whether the books are for the use of teachers to help them to structure

ised speech" and "activated agendas" — which is no more comprehensible in French than it is in English. This is accompanied by a "simple diagram" that rates the characters in terms of their "destination", "object" and "attitude", linking them with a shower of arrows. The work concludes: "The system of enunciation is conserved when the subjects' wording demands it."

Michel Paget says: "What happens is that pupils get a 400-page book but only use only about 50 pages during the year." This is bad for the national budget because the State pays for all textbooks until children leave college at the age of 16 to enter the lycée, where their parents have to find the £150 annual cost of books. Because the average price of a textbook is £17, the result is that they don't get changed for years on end. Sometimes, they can be 15 years old and inappropriate to new programmes."

In the short term, M. Allègre hopes that the ticking-off he gave publishers will produce smaller, cheaper and more comprehensible books.

In the long term, IT advocates say, computers will provide teachers with all the materials they need, leaving textbooks to offer simple guidance and exercises for pupils.

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Chris McGrath finds the Teeton Mill team calm as Cheltenham looms

Williams riding wave of expectation

Venetia Williams is making a better job of containing her Cheltenham Festival nerves than are the Herefordshire hills with the River Wye. Yesterday's flooded valley, where she trains Teeton Mill, further absorbed a surfeit of expectation, as she stacked her sandbags against rising levels of interest in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup favourite.

Once the electric gates had closed on the last of the scribes and television crews leaving an open morning at her stables, she hoped to be left alone for some quiet counting. Days before the Festival now come to life. The number of sound legs demonstrably included, yesterday, the four attached to Teeton Mill. Then there are her blessings, among which perhaps the most valuable just now, is that she is too self-possessed to fret about things beyond her control.

Yet these include the factor that could decide the Gold Cup. Norman Williamson, Teeton Mill's jockey, concedes that his contest with the Irish champion, Florida Pearl, will be "very tactical" — and Miss Williams is leaving him to play his own hand.

Though keeping his cards prudently close to his chest, he gave the impression that he will not risk playing his ace with quite the same ferocity as when, for instance, he burned off his rivals leaving the back straight in the King George VI Chase. The much stiffer track at Cheltenham remains the scene of Teeton Mill's sole defeat under Rules, against Double Thriller in a hunter chase last spring, and to assert a long way out might leave him exposed on the climb to the line.

Williams was greatly heartened, then, by the facility with which Teeton Mill dropped back in trip at Ascot last month. "Now I've



Venetia Williams parades the leading Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup hope, Teeton Mill, at her Herefordshire base yesterday

got options," he said. "Before I might have been thinking I had to kick on at the top of the hill and stretch them, which is the way he's won his two biggest races."

"But now he has shown that he has a lot of speed, too. It will be very tactical, but after Ascot at least I can ride him in different ways."

He shares the bemusement of Miss Williams that the sceptics who doubted his speed at Ascot have been replaced by those who now question whether will stay up the Cheltenham hill.

"When he won the Hennessy he looked an out-and-out stayer," the Irishman said. "Then in the King

George people said he was tying up, but he jumped the second last like it was the first and I pulled him up to jump the last. When you're far in front you don't want to do what Barton Bank did. I was on his back, and I've no worries."

The other side of the tactical coin is that Richard Dunwoody can track

him through the race on Florida Pearl. "That horse has exceptional cruising speed," Williamson said. "And that's what you need in the Gold Cup." Hywel Davies, the former jockey representing Teeton Mill's owners, The Winning Line, added: "I can see Florida Pearl staying on his tail, expecting to kick go-

RICHARD EVANS
NED ARADDON LAD (4m) ♀ (Ned Araddon)
Trotter. Prolific, well-rewarded, 3rd in 1m 1-1/2. Above his eight-year-old best, but above his eight-year-old best, judge on a close-up basis for the classy Barton last

Ned Monksdale (Oscocool) (4yo) Doncaster

Winning Line
casts net overseas

By CHRIS MCGRATH

IMPORTED horses from New Zealand have made a considerable impression over recent seasons — none more so than Lord Gyllene, the 1997 Grand National winner, but few have arrived on these shores with better credentials than Cardiff Arms.

The favourite for the New Zealand St Leger this weekend, the five-year-old has been purchased by The Winning Line as a National Hunt prospect. "He has been bought for us by Jim Mallow, who found Lord Gyllene, and he says that Cardiff Arms is every bit as good as him, if not better," a spokesman for The Winning Line said. "Though he is the best flat horse in New Zealand, he has been bought with a chasing career in mind."

This will be supervised by Venetia Williams, though there is also a chance that he will be tried on the flat.

Direct Route, the former favourite for the Queen Mother Champion Chase, is unlikely to run in the two-mile showpiece on Wednesday week.

The eight-year-old burst a blood vessel when well beaten at Ascot last month and his preparation since has been hampered by wet weather.

"It is odds-against him running," Howard Johnson, his trainer, said yesterday. "I haven't been able to do anything with him since he ran at Ascot."

ing to the last. But if Norman rides his own race, it will be up to the others to try to beat him. This horse travels well, jumps quickly and will appreciate the strong pace."

Williamson is enjoying a marvellous season and has a corresponding book of Festival rides, though he may yet have to abandon Nick Dunwoody if the Irish novice takes on Teeton Mill. Obviously I hope he runs in the Royal & SunAlliance Chase instead, but if the ground is soft he'll go well wherever he runs," Lady Rebecca is favourite for the Bonuprint Stayers' Hurdle, while Williamson is sanguine about her lack of substance and jumping errors. "She does miss the odd one but every time arrives back on the bridle immediately. She rides a lot bigger than she is, a lot of 17-hand horses wouldn't cover as much ground."

Miss Williams, unconcerned that Lady Rebecca pulled off a shock on Wednesday, will be represented in the Smurfit Champion Hurdle by Bellator, having "run out of time" with Happy Change and Stretchez. But it will be with Teeton Mill in mind that she surveys the Wye valley and reflects on the sort of tide that, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

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MOTOR RACING

Williams out to regain pole position

FROM KEVIN EASON IN MELBOURNE

THE signs pointed to the Williams museum, but there were no lights on in the room dedicated to the most successful constructor of grand prix cars in history. If Williams is supposed to be a team in crisis — 1998 was its first season without a victory in ten years — then Sir Frank Williams refuses to acknowledge it.

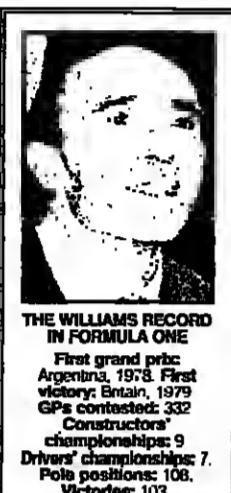
Of course he was stung by the ignominy of seeing his cars run in the middle of the pack while McLaren and Ferrari were duelling for the world championship, but one bad season in 20 does not mean that his team is in danger of collapse.

"Last year brought us a season that was bad for the ego," he admitted, "because so many people had put so much mental and physical energy into the car and the team. But you have to take the rough with the smooth. The upside is that a year like that makes you examine what you are doing."

This from a man who had been threatening to turn Formula One into a Williams benefit. Seven seasons had brought five constructors' championships, bringing his total to nine — more than any other team — plus drivers' titles for Alain Prost, Nigel Mansell, Damon Hill and Jacques Villeneuve.

By the standards of most other teams, last season was not that bad, for Williams finished in third place, but what really stung Williams and Patrick Head, his long-time partner, was the realisation that their cars were outclassed.

The reaction to defeat has been vigorous and no effort has been spared at the factory, which is on the outskirts of the tiny village of Grove, Oxfordshire. This season's



THE WILLIAMS RECORD IN FORMULA ONE
First grand prix: April 1977. First victory: Britain, 1979.
GP's contested: 332. Constructors' championships: 9. Drivers' championships: 7. Pole positions: 108. Victories: 103.

the maverick brilliance of Ayrton Senna.

Williams also has a gambling streak, which is why he is willing to take a chance on Zanardi and Schumacher. Zanardi, twice CART (IndyCar) champion, is largely an unknown quantity in Formula One. Schumacher, Michael's erratic brother, spent much of last season ploughing his Jordan into the gravel traps.

Williams is banking on their contrasting qualities to help inspire a revival in a season that he refuses to accept as an interim one until the arrival of new BMW engines for



Zanardi, left, and Ralf Schumacher, the drivers Williams has chosen to carry the standard this season

2000. This season's Renault-based Supertec engine is improved, though almost certainly will still not be a match for the Mercedes, of McLaren, or Ferrari, which means that the drivers will have to rely on the chassis and aerodynamics re-dressing the balance, particularly on the twistier, low-speed circuits, such as Hungary.

"Alex is a charming individual," Williams said, "while Ralf is very intense. He is also a very aggressive driver. Alex, at times, has not been so quick in testing, but over a race distance, there is not much between them. People had told me

throughout 1997 to watch Alex in CART and he impressed me a lot because he seems a real fighter. We are taking a bit of a chance with him, but not much. With Ralf, you see a driver who had his problems but can only get better."

The big question is whether the team as a whole can get better and so relegate last season to a mere blip in the history of a remarkable organisation. Williams is anticipating closer racing than for some years, with Jordan, Benetton and, possibly, the brash British American Racing team, making an impact.

After more than 330 grands prix, he is eager to start racing again. "I am waiting with some impatience," he said. "We have worked hard on what we think could be a special car, but we will have no idea how good it is until that first qualifying session. Then the contest really will have started."

LINKS
WEBSITE: www.formula1.com/
TELEVISION:
Tomorrow: Qualifying, 2.15pm. Sunday: The race live, 2am (repeated at 11.05am, highlights 11.45pm).

ATHLETICS

British meeting continues to drop in status

FROM DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT
IN MAEBASHI, JAPAN

GREAT Britain's most prestigious athletics meeting has been downgraded to third-division status by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF). The British Grand Prix, a member of the elite division until the formation of the Golden League last year, has been relegated for the second successive season and has slipped outside the world's top 15 meetings for the first time.

Sheffield had failed, Gyulai said, to meet the standards required to retain its grand prix I status. The lower status will make it more difficult to attract athletes as the number of points available towards qualifying for the grand prix final drops with each division.

More might have to be spent in appearance fees and prize-money. Nevertheless, Britain is better equipped to deal with the

summer ahead and Moorcroft was pleased with the British indoor grand prix in Birmingham last month, promoted by Fast Track.

"The BUPA grand prix proved what we can do," Moorcroft said. "We felt that last year's results were an exception and we gave the IAAF every assurance that we have the finances and infrastructure to merit grand prix status, but this was not enough."

It was not all bad news for Britain yesterday. Nebiolo said that a decision on where to stage the 2003 world championships would be delayed at least until November. The British bid for London is stuck in the blocks, waiting for the completion of the sale of Wembley Stadium.

Max Jones, Britain's performance director, expressed the hope that the athletes would maintain the momentum from 1998. In six previous world indoor championships, Great Britain has won only three gold medals. Jones is hoping for four here — from Ashia Hansen, in the triple jump, Colin Jackson, in the 60 metres hurdles, Jamie Baulch, in the 400 metres, and the men's 4x400 metres team.

"The 20th century will end as it started, with one man universally recognised as the undisputed king of the ring."

-Glyn Leach, Editor, Boxing Monthly.

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fish meeting
continues to
top in status

THE TIMES FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

SPORT 47

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan prepare for challenge from their peers

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

FOR A fourth summer of the JJB Super League to produce a different winner would involve Wigan Warriors, the 1998 champions, being cast as one-hit wonders — a dangerous assumption to make of any side coached by John Monie. Nevertheless, they face a more formidable challenge from Leeds Rhinos who were runners-up last year, with a resurgent Bradford Bulls joining the fray.

Cynics argued that St Helens and Bradford won the first two Super League titles because Wigan let their standards slip, an impression that was corrected by Wigan last season. However, one of several optimistic signs for the sport is that the rest are catching Wigan up in the case of Leeds, under Graham Murray, they may have overtaken them.

The successful introduction of the play-offs last year, combined with as many as a dozen clubs who can reasonably lay claim to the position among the top five make this the most unpredictable season for years. Rather than being dominated by one superpower, the league has three, in Leeds, Wigan and Bradford, with significant strides being taken by Warrington Wolves and Castleford Tigers.

With two former Great Britain coaches back from Australia in Ellery Hanley, at St Helens, and Malcolm Reilly, at Huddersfield Giants, another club that has caught the ambitious mood despite finishing bottom last year, there is no shortage of the determination necessary to withstand an extended 30-match programme.

One of the few disappointments of the season, which starts when Wigan play Hull Sharks at home tonight, is that the advancements made by playing once a week are being compromised by the addition of seven further fixtures, with the introduction of Gateshead Thunder and Wakefield Trinity to a 14-team competition and a series of "box-office" midweek matches. Leeds and



Wigan, for instance, meet three times before the play-offs. By the time that the Great Britain squad heads off to Australia and the autumn series with that country and New Zealand — presuming that all wrinkles are ironed out by the Rugby League International Federation next week — Andy Goodway, the Britain coach, will be in a familiar position of trying to coax the best out of some tired players.

Super League Europe has to make the game pay and attract new sponsors to replace JJB after this season. It has launched a raunchy advertising campaign directed at the female market, which is in danger of confusing rugby

The final countdown

The top five clubs play elimination and qualifying play-offs. The top three in the Super League is rewarded by having to win only one play-off to reach the Grand Final, at Old Trafford on October 9. For the other clubs in the competition, they would have to beat all the teams above them.

ROUND ONE (Sept. 17-19): Elimination play-off: South v. North. Qualifying play-off: second v. third.

ROUND TWO (Sept. 24-26): Elimination semi-final qualifying play-off: South v. elimination semi-final play-off winner. Qualifying semi-final first v. qualifying play-off winner.

ROUND THREE (Oct. 3): Elimination first qualifying semi-final: South v. elimination semi-final play-off winner.

GRAND FINAL: Between round three winners.

PRIZE MONEY: Winners £225,000. Runners-up £175,000. Third £130,000. Fourth £100,000. Fifth £70,000.

league with a "ladies night" event. Because it was good for business in Australia does not necessarily mean it will have the same impact here.

Nonetheless, season-ticket sales are up across the board. It may not sound much, but, in these turbulent times for many professional sports, rugby league has the benefit of stability, both in financial terms, with a revised television contract up to 2003, and the knowledge that "summer" is established as the accepted season for the leading competition.

With talk of breakaways and feuds now over, the new feel is down principally to the entry of Gateshead and the professional manner in which it has been set up. A demanding season will put strains on squads, but also bring to the fore names such as Kevin Sinfield and Karl Pratt, at Leeds, and Leon Pryce and Paul Deanon, at Bradford, as British stars of the future.

By the play-offs, Wigan will

have said farewell to Central Park after 97 years and moved to the 25,000-seat stadium taking shape at Robin Park — a symbol of change in a game that is heading, albeit slowly, in the right direction.

Arguably the most famous number in rugby league — the 102,569 spectators at Olds, who watched the 1954 Challenge Cup final replay between Warrington and Halifax — will disappear from the record books tomorrow.

All 10,000 tickets have been

sold for the opening Australian National Rugby League double-header, between Manly and Newcastle, and St George Illawarra and Parramatta, which marks the opening of Stadium Australia, the venue for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

Smyth is a case in point. Yesterday was the 46th year and twentieth day of his life, which makes him the second-oldest man in the field at the Portuguese Open, but there was nothing remotely venerable about his golf, a 66 giving him a two-stroke lead on a course on which preferred lies are being used because of a lack of consistent growth on the fairways.

Throughout his career, Smyth, who



Redef Goosen plays his opening shot of the first round in Penina yesterday on his way to a 68 and a share of second place, two shots behind Smyth

Smyth's old-time sorcery spells trouble for rivals

FROM MEL WEBB IN PENINA, PORTUGAL

AS A rule, sport is demonstrably the province of the young and vigorous, but on the European tour no truck is countenanced with such ageist notions. In golf, if you're good enough, you're young enough and yesterday callow youth was left hyper-vibrating as one of the game's senior citizens showed them as clean a pair of heels as they will ever see.

Like Old Father Thame's, Des Smyth just keeps rolling along. He is one of only eight still regularly playing European Tour events whose membership began in the days of pre-qualifying, the Russian roulette system under which competitors had to play their way into tournaments on the Mondays preceding them.

They were old-time hustlers, this brave little band, men who put their talents on the line in a hand-to-mouth existence that risked all and guaranteed nothing. Cruel though it undoubtedly was, those who survived were imbued with toughness and a resilience that continue to serve them well, even as their golfing dotage draws nigh.

Smyth is a case in point. Yesterday was the 46th year and twentieth day of his life, which makes him the second-oldest man in the field at the Portuguese Open, but there was nothing remotely venerable about his golf, a 66 giving him a two-stroke lead on a course on which preferred lies are being used because of a lack of consistent growth on the fairways.

Throughout his career, Smyth, who

played his 500th European Tour event at the Dubai Desert Classic three weeks ago, has been possessed of a sorcerer's touch on and around the greens. Give him a wedge or a putter and ask him to demonstrate what he can do with it, then marvel as everything short of a Rachmaninov piano concerto will issue forth.

It was with the short-distance clubs that he built his six-under-par score. He chipped in twice for two of his seven birdies and took only 24 putts. Come to think of it, perhaps that snatches of music that wafted across the course in mid-morning might have been the big Rachmaninov number after all.

The Irishman was, naturally, quietly pleased with himself, but he has been around too long to get carried away. "An awful lot can happen between now and Sunday," he said. "This was just one good round, that's all."

Having played indifferently in his first two appearances of the season, he said that he had scared himself into playing well in the face of ever-improving standards being produced by the next generation. "The 66 was due less to confidence, more to fear," he said. "These days I feel like a hare in a coursing race."

He will probably be caught today, hounds being the dogged sorts they are. But for now, it did not matter; for now, it was Hare 66, Hounds 68 or worse.

Scores, page 48

US-based Swede in Ryder Cup picture

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN MIAMI

a. 71, Thomas Bjorn a 72 and Nick Faldo a 73.

Hjertstedt, 27, is slight, quietly-spoken and, being dark-haired, looks more American than Swedish. Though born in Sweden, he lived in Australia for 12 years before moving first to the West Coast of the United States and then to Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

He believes that he needs to win at least one more tournament over here to come into the reckoning for Mark James's Europe team, for which he is eligible as a member of the European Tour. "If I do so, I will certainly have a chance," he said. "I would love to play in it. I think it would be nerve-racking, but I would like to see some of the fellows I played junior golf with again."

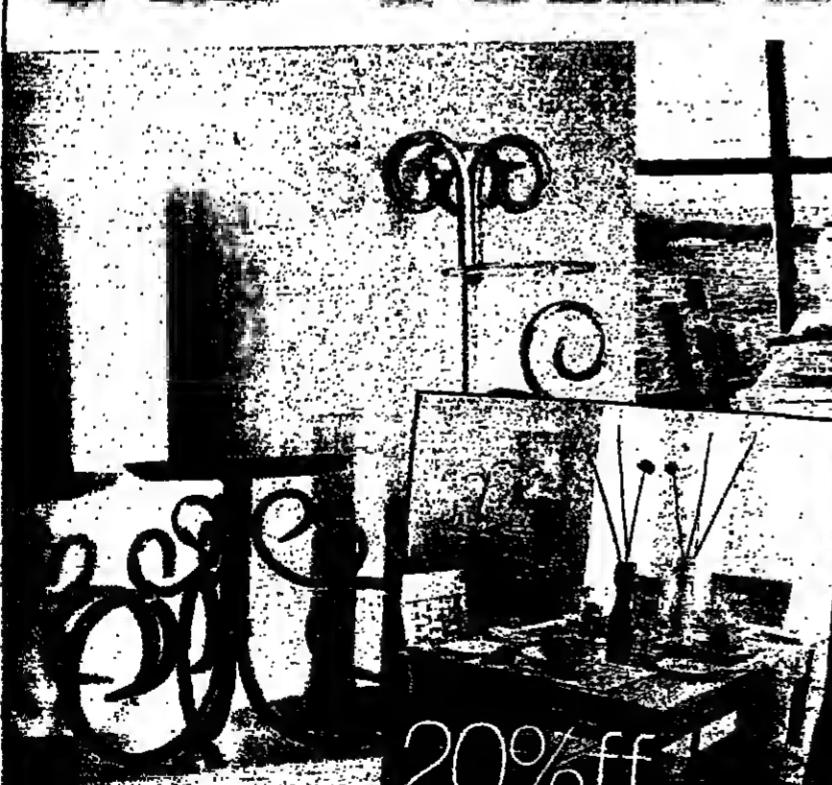
Faldo salvaged what was a disappointing round by single-putting his last three greens and taking birdies on two of the holes. There was a testing wind to add to the difficulties of this 7,125-yard course where Faldo won in 1995 when he rejoined the US PGA Tour. Such victories seem a long time ago now.

He was muttering to himself as he strode off in the direction of the putting green and practice ground having confessed: "I am still not hitting it full blast."

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CHANGING TIMES

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with The Times:

Lesson 46 - More on responder's second bid

The principles governing responder's second bid are similar to those on the first round. I will first look at the situation where opener has shown a minimum hand. If responder has:

- a minimum hand (say 6-9 HCP), he should either pass or give simple preference to opener's first suit (i.e. put opener back to his first suit at the minimum level);
- something extra (10-12 HCP with a fit or 11-12 without a fit) he should make an invitational bid;
- 13 HCP or more, he should make sure game is reached.

Here are some examples. Suppose the bidding has started 1c-1a-2c:

(A) ♠ KQ43	(B) ♠ A98652	(C) ♠ K105
43	5	Q3
QJ1072	K54	A197
76	J54	1097
(D) ♠ A10542	(E) ♠ QJ76	(F) ♠ A10853
K43	A2	A64
A4	Q107	K54
1055	A1042	3

Hand (A) is not that bad a hand but there is little prospect of game facing a minimum Two Heart rebid. Pass. On Hand (B) it may be tempting to bid Two Spades but how many hearts do you think partner has? Remember, he would open One No-Trump if he was balanced (no void, no singleton and no more than one doubleton), so his distribution cannot be 5-3-2. If he is 5-4-2-2 he would bid his four-card suit in preference to rebidding his hearts; ergo he has a six-card suit. There is no reason to be afraid of a Two Heart contract. It is better to let things drop as quickly as possible. Pass.

Hands (C) and (D) both have 11 HCP, worth a game invitation. You have already shown your spade suit, so with Hand (C) bid Two No-Trumps and with Hand (D) bid Three Hearts.

Hands (E) and (F) are similar but a little stronger. Now you want to ensure that game is reached so bid Three No-Trumps and Four Hearts respectively.

These hands have been relatively straightforward because the right denomination has been fairly clear. This has meant that you could either bid game or make a sensible limit bid, depending on your values. It is not always as easy as that. Next week I will look at some examples of how to investigate further when you are not sure what trumps should be.

You can get any lesson you may have missed from this beginners' course by sending two 20p stamps per lesson (or five stamps per set of five) to Sally Brock, 73 Totteridge Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7QA. Don't forget to state which ones you want.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

PISOLITHS
a. Kidney stones
b. Leaning columns
c. Rock particles

STERADIAN
a. Denture cleanser
b. Geometrical quantity
c. Starlit satellite

CISEAUX PAS
a. A ballet step
b. A false move
c. The opening bid

COUVADE
a. Lingerie
b. Espionage
c. Natal ritual

Answers on page 50

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Psyched out

Garry Kasparov, the world champion, continued his winning ways in the ninth round of the elite tournament at Linares by dispatching Vassily Ivanchuk for the second time.

Kasparov now leads with 7/9, a colossal score in a tournament of this strength, by a 1½ point margin over his closest rival, Vladimir Kramnik, the Russian grandmaster.

However, the most striking aspect of Kasparov's win against Ivanchuk is that the Ukrainian grandmaster, awed by Kasparov's dominating presence at the board, may have resigned prematurely.

White: Garry Kasparov
Black: Vassily Ivanchuk
Linares 1999

Queen's Gambit Accepted

1. d4	d5	Qe3+
2. c4	dc4	Nd7
3. Nf3	g5	Bc6
4. e3	g4	Nb5
5. Bc4	g3	Bd5
6. 0-0	h6	Bd6
7. Bb3	h5	Bc7
8. Nc3	h4	d4
9. exd4	h3	Black resigns
10. Re1	0-0	
11. a3	Na5	
12. Bc2	b5	
13. d5	Na4	
14. Qd3	Re8	
15. a4	exd5	
16. axb5	g5	
17. b3	Nd6	
18. Nc4	Bb7	
19. g3	Rc8	
20. Nc4	Re8	
21. Qd2	g6	
22. Re1+	Nd8	
23. Re1	Re2	
24. Re2	Rc7	
25. Bc3		

European Cup: Ferguson eyes semi-final place after fine display at Old Trafford

United look forward to next hurdle

By MATT DICKINSON

ALEX FERGUSON could relax yesterday, seemingly surrounded by the riches of Croesus. The official launch of his testimonial had heralded a year that will see him add at least £1 million, tax free, to his salary as manager of Manchester United. And then there was the wealth accrued by his team the previous night, as they banked a 2-0 victory in the first leg of their European Cup quarter-final against Internazionale.

It was a typically dancelike triumph by this United side, who toed with a 50-50 score as well as late disaster, but they did enough to convince most inside Old Trafford, and quite probably the San Siro, that the semi-finals beckon. Ferguson would not admit as much yesterday, but his satisfaction was as transparent as Inter's plumbetting morale. "We will score more there," Ferguson insisted for at least the fifth time since Wednesday night and he is adamant that not even the return of Ronaldo can threaten his side's well-earned advantage.

He is probably right and such was the self-belief fostered by United's triumph at a bubbling Old Trafford that the mind could not stop racing ahead to the tests that lie ahead. The route to the final in Barcelona on May 26 is already being plotted, with Bayern Munich, Juventus and Dynamo Kiev the most likely possible semi-final opponents.

All are clubs of impressive stature, but the style of the victory on Wednesday night has thrown up tantalising thoughts that United can match, and beat, the best. It is not just in Ferguson's eye that The Cliff training ground that such pre-emptive calculations are taking place. The Football Association's international sub-committee refuses to accept the Scotsman's protestations that not only is he reluctant to manage England, but incapable of it because of his Govan breeding.

The committee men cling to the hope that he and Brian Kidd can be persuaded to resume their coaching partnership if United win the European Cup. A few minutes with Ferguson yesterday would have persuaded them that they are wasting



Consistent goalscorers such as Yorke, left, celebrating with Beckham, and Shevchenko are worth their weight in gold to their teams

Shevchenko sets goal standard

By ROB HUGHES

The importance of a goalscorer has never been more evident than in the European Cup. Be it Dwight Yorke, Andrei Shevchenko, Filippo Inzaghi or Giovanni Elber — each of whom scored on Wednesday night — the mathematical fact is that he who scores the first goal does not lose the game in Europe. That holds good for 84 per cent of the 76 matches played this season.

Small wonder that Manchester United feel vindicated by the £12 million fee that they paid for Yorke and that Dynamo Kiev have resisted more than £15 million for Shevchenko. It is the ability of Yorke to remain composed when opportunity knocks, the cold nerve of Shevchenko to finish where others freeze, that makes them exceptions in a team sport.

If United and Kiev press home their advantage in the second legs of their quarter-final ties, and if they avoid each other in the semi-finals, who knows how much the value of those two players will rise by the time of the final in May?

It is an inexorable law of the football business that goals are gold in the bank, but, just as Yorke can put

them in only when someone provides the ball as exquisitely as David Beckham, so Shevchenko relies on an almost telepathic partnership. In the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, Ian St John, who preceded the remarkable duo of Kevin Keegan and John Toshack at Liverpool, had some telling observations after Toshack's Real Madrid were held 1-1 at home by Kiev.

"He's some striker, Shevchenko, but the other one is the better player," St John said. "The other one, Sergei Rebrov, is a Russian among Ukrainians. He does not have the startling pace the greed for goals or the athletic stamina of Shevchenko, yet Rebrov is the Ukraine player of the year for the second time. What Rebrov does better than Shevchenko is share the ball. He sees more, he instigates more and, although Shevchenko has scored 15 goals in 25 European Cup games, Rebrov created the opening for him again this week."

"I can find my partner with my eyes closed," Rebrov had said, and this time he probably did. It was route-one football, the ball kicked long by Alexander Shovkovsky, the goalkeeper, and Rebrov, all 5ft 6in

of him, outjumping Fernando Hierro, the big Real Madrid defender. That released Shevchenko — who, of course, had to anticipate his team-mate leaping so high — one-on-one with Bodil Illgner, the Real Madrid goalkeeper. No contest. Shevchenko scored low and precisely.

Though Predrag Mijatovic, whose goal won the European Cup final last season, equalised with a free kick, Real Madrid missed further chances that fell to Mijatovic, Morientes and Raúl. In the second leg, when Kiev should be drawing out, Real Madrid will need the kind of inspiration that Juventus found last year to turn a 1-1 home leg draw into a 5-2 aggregate win.

Inzaghi scored for Juventus three times in Kiev, but only once in the Stadio delle Alpi on Wednesday, where Olympiakos forced a late penalty to go home with only a 2-1 deficit. "We came off the pitch physically and morally destroyed," Inzaghi said. "We deserved more and I could have scored twice more, but the referee allowed four minutes of injury time and the penalty came

in the sixth minute. We will have to show our team spirit in Greece."

In Germany there is one truly captivating striker, and he is Brazilian. Like Yorke, like Shevchenko, Elber comes alive under Europe's big lights and, on the half-hour, with a typical volley, he began Bayern Munich's 2-0 defeat of Kaiserslautern.

"They are the better team, that's obvious," Otto Rehhagel, the Kaiserslautern trainer, said. "but the fear that Bayern would totally outclass us didn't happen and it does not mean we can't qualify." However, Rehhagel senses that the loss of Olaf Marschall, his main goalscorer, from the first leg, and probably through the same knee injury that the return match could dull Kaiserslautern's edge.

In Europe, as the facts demonstrate, you are lost without the presence of a genuine striker and someone to trigger him. So while Grigory Surikov, the Kiev chairman, discusses the price for Shevchenko with AC Milan, a really smart and really rich buyer might offer Ukraine's champion club £30 million for Shevchenko and Rebrov. It is only money and the European Cup appears sometimes as if it invents the stuff.

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

Villa end pursuit of Stubbs

ASTON VILLA have called off their attempt to sign Alan Stubbs, the Celtic central defender. Villa increased their offer from £3.25 million to £4.25 million, but Celtic refused to budge from their original asking price of £6.5 million.

John Gregory, the Villa manager, said: "I've said all along that I will not be held to ransom over this or any other deal. As far as I'm concerned, the deal is dead. We made our final offer, Celtic said they were not prepared to drop their price and we will now be looking elsewhere."

If Chelsea and Manchester United draw their FA Cup quarter-final at Old Trafford on Sunday, they will play the replay only three days later. The second game will take place at Stamford Bridge on March 10, replacing Chelsea's match against

Middlesbrough and Manchester United's game away to Liverpool in the FA Carling Premiership. The move has been made because of the clubs' involvement in Europe, when any replay should have been played.

Steve Stone, the unsettled Nottingham Forest midfield player, has reiterated his desire to leave the City Ground. "When I signed my last contract, I said I wanted to be at a club with the same ambition as me — a club which thought it was going places. For whatever reasons, that hasn't happened," he said. Forest are still hopeful of signing Richard Gough, the former Rangers defender.

Paul Gascoigne, the Middlesbrough midfield player, has been suspended for one match and fined £2,000 by the Football Association for reaching 11 bookings this season.

Marin O'Neill, the Leicester City manager, is confident that Emile Heskey, the England Under-21 striker, will be fit to face Tottenham Hotspur in the Worthington Cup final on March 21. A scan on the back injury that has dogged Heskey for the past three months revealed no serious damage.

Lynby, the Danish club, have rejected an offer of £1.8 million from Sunderland for Carsten Fredsgaard, a 22-year-old attacking midfield player.

Alan Curtisby, the Charlton Athletic manager, has been named Carling Manager of the Month for February after a four-match unbeaten run.

The builders are still in at Barnsley. Yellow dump trucks groaned their way up and down hills of soil at Oakwell yesterday as work continues on the improvement of the stadium. Mud caught in the wheels of the players' BMWs and Toyota Land Cruisers as they sped away into the Yorkshire gloom. The big-time bestowed plenty of benefits on the club during its doomed but feisty one-season flirtation with the FA Carling Premiership.

Tomorrow, the big time is back in town. Not to linger like it did before, but like a long-lost love on a flying visit. The cold touch of reality has invaded the romanticism that clung to Barnsley last season as they fought to avoid relegation.

The Nationwide League has not been kind to them and this morning, far from pressing for an immediate return to the top flight, they

Hendrie bides his time in quest for glory



Oliver Holt sees how Barnsley are coping with life outside the Premiership

They did beat Manchester United in the competition last season, on a memorable night at Oakwell when Hendrie was one of the scorers.

He has exiled those memories from his mind, though. Wilson

was a folk hero in Barnsley, the man who led the side, against all odds and to the astonishment of the football community at large, into the promised land amid the fat cats and billion-dollar corporations. Nothing Hendrie does can equal such an impact.

Once Barnsley succumbed to the drop, in fact, and lost all the television money that comes with Premiership status, they were condemned to a lowering of their sights. Those who expected them to go straight back up have been swiftly disillusioned, but Hendrie has refused to lose his composure.

"People say that it must have been hard following Danny Wilson," he said yesterday in one of



Hendrie realistic approach. play a big part in it. The supporters here are not content with what is happening now. They have had a taste of the big time and they want more. There is a high expectation level and there is no way that we will settle for the Nationwide League.

"But you have to remember that Danny was here for four years and he didn't get it right for the first two. It won't happen overnight for me either. I have been in the game all my life and I am not muggins enough to think like that. If some thought we would go straight back up, I was not one of them."

Tomorrow, against a Spurs team sweeping all before them in the cups, the hard work is likely to become even harder.

rest of his internationals back to Barnsley as they try to move closer to a second Wembley appearance this season. For Hendrie, fresh from his latest reverse, the 1-0 home defeat by Bradford City on Wednesday, the game represents a welcome respite from league woes and another chance to advance his managerial education.

"It has been a pretty steep learning process," he said. "I did not even have a wee bit of an apprenticeship. The biggest shock was the amount of hours I have had to put in. At times it means you can't have any family life. I realise now that, for the 18 years of my playing career, I was on my holidays. You don't realise how lucky you are."

Tomorrow, against a Spurs team sweeping all before them in the cups, the hard work is likely to become even harder.

Aylesbury give Harding new mission

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

HARDING was yesterday appointed manager of Aylesbury United, the leaders of the Ryman League premier division, in succession to Bob Dowie, who was dismissed last week.

Harding resigned from

Farnborough Town on

Monday, citing the failure of the

Nationwide Conference club to

supply money promised to

help him to lead the fight

against relegation.

As at Farnborough, Hard-

ing has been given a specific

brief to lead Aylesbury into

the Conference — with the

promise of the job full-time

and a £10,000-a-week salary.

Dowie, 69, signed off as

manager of Dagenham and

Redbridge in style with a 4-0 victory over Hampton at Victoria Road on Wednesday night. Dave Andrews, the chairman of the Ryman League club, said: "At the start of the season, he said it would be his last year.

Bill Carroll, the chairman, said: "Given the circumstances we are in, I believe John fits the bill very nicely. He is a top-notch coach, has good knowledge of the Conference and is a chirpy, bubbly and enthusiastic character."

Ted Hardy, 69, signed off as

manager of Dagenham and

Redbridge in style with a 4-0

victory over Hampton at Victoria Road on Wednesday night. Dave Andrews, the chairman of the Ryman League club, said: "At the start of the season, he said it would be his last year.

We're hit by injuries and, like most clubs at this level, it leaves you in trouble because you cannot field as big a squad as you would like," he said. "It's the same for every manager so I'm not putting it forward as an excuse, but I wasn't once this season able to put out the side I imagined."

Hardy looks back ruefully on a season that promised much but failed to deliver.

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RUGBY UNION

Ireland try to correct balance of expectation

FROM DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
IN DUBLIN

WARREN GATLAND, the Ireland coach, sounded a timely note of caution yesterday amid the rising anticipation of tomorrow's Five Nations Championship match against England at Lansdowne Road.

Such is the interest in the match that black-market ticket-sellers are said to be changing hands for £1600, but Gatland knows that his side is far from the finished article.

"If Ireland, Scotland or Wales had achieved England's recent results, they would be over the moon," Gatland said. "England have set high standards, which may make them vulnerable when they expect to do well, but makes them that much more dangerous when they come under pressure. It brings out the best in them, brings them closer together as a team."

"We are still learning to take our opportunities, to be consistent for 80 minutes. Against Wales, we panicked a bit, tried to defend a lead and stopped playing rugby. But we are learning how to finish a game... and I don't think any Ireland player would not fancy his chances against his opposition on Saturday."

At least Gatland knows that his side will go the distance, having finished so strongly against South Africa and Wales. "We now have a group of people who believe in themselves, who believe they can compete with any side," Donal Lenihan, the manager, said. "It may be a compliment to us that England arrived on Tuesday to prepare; on the other hand, it also shows their professionalism."

England, so deeply disappointed with their narrow victory over Scotland, have begun already the process of rehabilitation. Lawrence Dallaglio, the captain, whose play and tactical approach have come under fire over the past ten

days, accepts the criticism. "If the team performs badly, the responsibility falls on me, but you can be sure that, behind closed doors, everyone accepts a degree of responsibility," he said.

"We will be meeting an Ireland side on top of their game, but, on the positive side, we have a lot of experienced players who know the Five Nations and who know what it takes to win in Dublin."

"The expectation on us is huge after the win over South Africa in December. The public want success, but they also want it with style. We are looking for consistency of performance, which should lead to the results that everyone wants. I have belief in my ability as a player and captain and that has been reinforced by the coach and by the team."

Dallaglio shrugs off any suggestion that the back row chosen for tomorrow is not the best available. He has played No 8 for Wasps, for England and for the British Isles and feels thoroughly at home in a position that carries with it an enhanced level of decision-making. However, it might assist England's performance if he and Richard Hill refrain from swapping positions during the game against an Ireland pack that will severely examine England's defence.

Neil Back, an integral player in that area, acknowledged that the absence of Will Greenwood, the powerful centre, has been a blow to England. Not only can Greenwood create space for other backs; he offers the back row an obvious target. It would be wrong to expect the same from Jonathan Wilkinson, his replacement, though young Wilkinson is keen to take on a greater attacking role than against Scotland, which indicates both competence and more significantly, confidence.

RFU lets Yates off lightly

BY DAVID HANDS

KEVIN YATES, the Bath prop, who was suspended for six months last year for biting Simeon Fearn's ear during a cup match with London Scottish, received a further suspension yesterday, though far less than he might have feared. Yates was banned by a Rugby Football Union (RFU) disciplinary panel until April 1 for "reckless" use of the boot during the Allied Dunbar Premiership game against Wasps last month.

Yates, capped by England in Argentina in 1997, was cited by Wasps after a facial injury to Paul Volley, their flanker, which required seven stitches. A three-month suspension was a possibility, but, after scrutinising the video evidence during a hearing lasting less than two hours, the RFU panel, chaired by Jonathan Dance, decided that Yates's action to the game on February 7 had been reckless, but not wilful, and that he should serve no more than a month.

Nigel Melville, the Wasps director of rugby, said Yates's punishment was appropriate. "We wanted it to be confirmed that stamping on heads has no part in our game," he said.

Yet it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Calcutta Cup match during the intervening period, when Martin Johnson was given a yellow card for stamping on the neck of John Leslie, may have influenced the hearing. Johnson, the England lock, who will play against Ireland tomorrow, claimed the stamp on the Scotland centre was accidental and no action was taken.

Yates will miss league games against Richmond and Saracens and has still to determine how to pay costs due to London Scottish after the prolonged legal debate over the biting incident. London Scottish seek more than £20,000 and the RFU hope to bring the respective parties together next week. They are also due to determine another stamping incident on Tuesday, involving Austin Healey, the Leicester scrum half, during the game with London Irish, whose scrum half, Kevin Purt, was injured.

When France invented the beautiful game

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Commentary

Twenty-four years ago, Wales travelled to Paris to play their second match at the Parc des Princes, the stadium that had taken over from Stade Colombes. The Parc des Princes, with its overhanging stands, was a grimmer and more sombre place than the venerable stadium it had replaced.

Wales had six players enjoying their first taste of international rugby. It was a bold selectorial decision to initiate such raw talent into what had become, and still remains, the most forbidding of all cities in the Five Nations Championship for a Welshman to play. Remarkably, Wales won, for the second time in four years. Such success in Paris has elicited them ever since.

It has not always been like this. Between 1959 and 1969, Wales did not win a game in France, but they had previously dominated a series of matches between the countries. From 1908 until 1927, Wales won all the fixtures, with France achieving their first success the following year.

Their first win in Wales, for the first time, beat South Africa in Johannesburg in a two-match series. He was to lead them to the Five Nations Championship outright for the first time in their history the next year. This success provided the springboard for their recent eminence.

They were to achieve the grand slam for the first time in 1968 and, to prove their late flowering as a national team, they have repeated the feat on



'Castaigne had Wembley in awe, a genius unchained'



Dallaglio, the England captain, a towering presence yesterday below the turrets of the team's training headquarters

Henry works for better days

Mark Souster finds that the Wales coach is a fan of the Five Nations

Wales arrived in Paris yesterday led by Graham Henry, their coach from New Zealand, for whom the match tomorrow against France will be a first taste of international rugby in the French capital.

Henry has previously admitted being taken aback by the passion and intensity generated in the Five Nations Championship; on Wednesday, he reiterated his feelings. In response to a question about whether he felt the championship should be played on a home and away basis, as in the Tri-Nations tournament between New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, he said: "What we have now is the best international tournament in the world. Let's keep it that way."

Henry considers the skills level in the southern hemisphere to be superior, as is the tier of competition immediately below internationals, but he added: "That is taking nothing away from the intensity and expectation of the Five

Nations. They are huge games. In New Zealand, you don't have 75,000-capacity stadiums."

It is rather cruel, then, given Henry's fondness for a tournament that has often been dismissed in disparaging terms by other New Zealanders, that it has kicked him and Wales in the teeth so far—with every prospect of further poundings at the hands of France this weekend, and then England.

How the expectation of the autumn, which has evaporated so swiftly, has been and will continue to be the subject of endless analysis. Henry has his own theories, which he has made known, but he insists that he does not want them to be taken as excuses for a lack of success.

"There are obviously things behind the scenes that, if they were put right, would be of immense help," he said.

"There's a vital need for people in Welsh rugby to walk down the same road and have the same objectives. At the

moment, there is conflict, which isn't helping. The Cardiff-Swansea thing is playing on the players' minds.

There is instability for their future. There's a need for things to be resolved, hopefully in the short term."

Is he optimistic? "I'm always hopeful. It's a matter of everyone getting together and working out their differences. People will have to make compromises. We aren't a strong enough rugby nation to have these conflicts going on and expect to improve.

They need to be fixed up. As players and coaches, we need to insulate ourselves from those things as best we can."

There had been suggestions that Henry had issued an ultimatum to the Welsh Rugby Union, to whom he is contracted until after the 2003 World Cup. "I have been trying, in a reasonably subtle way, to work with the decision-makers. I am making my ideas very clear," he said.

"The instability is a real problem. The lack of competitive football below international level is a real problem. I have been involved in this sort of thing before, but when you get challenges like this, it brings the best out of people."

France were forced to make one change yesterday to the team to meet Wales. Olivier Magne, the Brive openside flanker, who has not missed a game through injury since his international debut in 1997, has had to withdraw because of a foot complaint.

He is replaced by Marc Raynard, of Narbonne, starting his first game for France.

SNOOKER

Threat on life leaves Wattana reeling

FROM PHIL YATES
IN BANGKOK

JAMES WATTANA, a national sporting hero here, bowed out of the Thailand Masters at the Ambassador Hotel last night after receiving an anonymous death threat only two hours before he met Ken Doherty in the last 16 of the world-ranking tournament.

Wattana, who captured the title in 1994 and 1995, was told, via his mobile telephone, to lose the match or "be prepared to die". It is believed the call, traced to a nearby public kiosk, was made by a member of an illegal betting syndicate.

Having held Doherty to 2-2, Wattana was beaten 5-2, but at no stage did he provide any indication that he was not giving his best. Doherty, who advanced to meet John Parrott, was unaware of the problem.

Wattana's mother, Ploy, advised her son to withdraw and was seen in tears. Seven years ago, on the day that Wattana produced a 147 maximum break against Tony Drago at the British Open, he was informed that his father had been shot dead by an assassin in Bangkok.

Even in such disturbing circumstances, Wattana, in poor form of late, managed to retain his sense of humour. "It was a good thing the guy asked me to lose. I don't know what I'd have done if he had said I'd got to win. That would have been difficult," he said.

The three-continent rule and an increase to an exhaustive 12 rounds of the cup meant also that four other runner-up cash prizes were not awarded, in men's sprint free-style and butterfly and women's distance freestyle and breaststroke, saving Fina, the international body, and its federations even more money from the \$230,000 (£140,000) available for prizes. As a solution, the rule was relaxed yesterday to two continents for the competition next year.

Although there were many fine performances last night—the most impressive of which was that of Agnes Kovacs of Hungary, whose 2min 23.79sec over the 200 metres breaststroke was the fastest in the world this year—the last session of the cup did not change the overall outcome of the World Cup. Great Britain's only success was second place for Susan Rolph in the sprint freestyle series.

SWIMMING

Champion denied in dispute over rules

FROM CRAIG LORD
IN IMPERIA, ITALY

THE World Cup came to an acrimonious end here last night when officials were lambasted for refusing to declare a men's medley champion and pay \$17,500 (£10,600) in prize-money on the grounds that neither Christian Keller, the German in the lead, nor any of those below him had competed at events on three continents.

Keller was denied the \$10,000 (£6,000) first prize after falling foul, along with 50 or so others, of a year-old rule that requires swimmers to race at least once in two zones away from their home continent during the 12-event series. The men's medley money will be held over for the next World Cup.

David Sparks, the chief executive of British swimming and a member of the World Cup committee, said that the decision had been made because "it would be unfair to all the federations and swimmers who have spent money travelling to waive the rule at this late stage". Keller said: "I'm really upset. In the medley, not one swimmer has been to three continents, so I am the fair winner."

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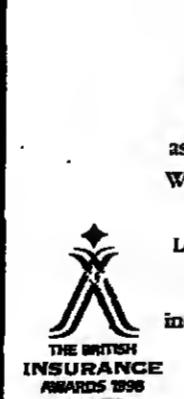
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Leaked revelations a blow to Channel 4 scoop

When you get your 15 minutes of fame make sure you've got a good agent. Having paid £400,000 for Monica Lewinsky's first UK television interview, Channel 4 was not going to be backward in laying forward. Preview tapes were withheld until yesterday morning, prompting cries of "Hold the television page" to echo around Wapping.

But given that yesterday's papers were full of accounts of her American interview with Barbara Walters, and that Channel 4 were sending out press releases containing the juicier quotes from Jon Snow, this may seem a little disingenuous. It won't do the book sales any harm, though.

Following Walters didn't make Jon Snow's job any easier. The more dramatic or lurid "revelations", such as Lewinsky's claim to have contemplated jumping from the tenth-storey office where 11 FBI men were grilling her, were

already in the public domain from advance publicity on Morton's book. We all guessed that she no longer valued Linda Tripp's friendship, and has mixed feelings about Clinton himself.

Now did it help that Lewinsky is polishing her act as she goes along? She told Walters, ludicrously, that lifting her skirt to show Clinton her strong knickers was a "small, subtle, flirtatious gesture". But for Snow this had been edited down to "a very small gesture". Not where I come from, it isn't.

In fact Snow's approach, which worked well, was to do the thinking for her. All the telling phrases came from him. Lewinsky herself talks in that teeth-tutting Californian emot-speak. She is "in touch with her sexuality", for instance, "and it needs to be honoured and cherished". Her family are to be "honoured" and "valued" and everyone she meets seems to have "vibed" her in some way or other:

Snow offered her a long string of telling propositions about her reactions and feelings, many of which seemed to set her thinking in ways she had not anticipated. She began with an extraordinary puppyish charm: wide-eyed, beaming, almost gushing and giggling like a schoolgirl — 25 going on 15.

But Snow pushed her firmly but tactfully into the darker zones, and a picture began to emerge of an admittedly self-deluding and less than completely moral, innocent, succumbed to a nightmare of cynicism, deceit and ruthless manipulation. The bubbles subsided and a troubled, saddened air descended, tinged with the fear that her immunity from prosecution could still be lifted by a false move, with the gates of the penitentiary beckoning.

The fact that Kenneth Starr's team have gagged her from discussing the way they "handled"

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

her surely torpedoed their claim to be disinterested seekers after truth. You do not have to like or admire Clinton to see that Lewinsky was a human dumm-bum bullet, fired in a failed coup d'état.

She seemed an amateur, guileless, warm-hearted woman, but this is a world of mirrors, most of them two-way, and hidden agendas, who can really tell? If only the President had heeded Rudyard

Kipling's observation that "a woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke". That's right, Bill.

Football's Foreign Legion (Channel 5) was an example of a rare and precious beast, a half-way decent Channel 5 documentary. Half-way only because, like Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*, the programme was something of a "foose and baggy monster".

There was an inconclusive discussion about whether the flood of foreign cuckoos was killing our native chicks, or whether they were teaching by example. A further inconclusive debate looked at the globalisation of the sport, suggesting that a multinational mogul such as, to pick an example at random, Rupert Murdoch, might plant a Japanese player on Manchester United in order to open up Japanese markets to his media products.

But most of the footage consisted

of profiles of genial foreign footballers such as Eyal Berkovic of Israel and West Ham, who has found happiness at Solly's kosher restaurant, Golders Green, even though his team-mates are often unimpressive as "zay spik Cocknuk!"

In fact the greatest effect of the foreign invasion may be on the fans. They have been introduced to smoother, classier, cleverer ways of playing "the beautiful game" as it is known to initiates. Or "the game of running about a lot in the mud" as it is known to the rest of us.

Not that that makes much difference to the Glasgow fans. They are determined that the new foreign players, including the six Roman Catholics playing for traditionally Protestant Rangers, are fully aware of the treasured heritage of Rangers-Celtic sectarian hatred, we're told.

But foreign players, unlike

Liverpool's Robbie Fowler, are not ashamed to be thoughtful. Chelsea's French international Frank Leboeuf, for instance, is no mad cow, whatever his name may imply. "We've got only one life and I want to be involving many cultures and it was very important to come abroad and see how English people lives," he rummaged appreciatively. I wonder if Gazzetta ever said that in Italian.

Would the ranting xenophobic fan who taunted Eric Cantona have realised what a prat he was if the mono-brow philosopher had not drop-kicked him in the solar plexus? Sadly the programme overlooked this point, but "zay plichard 'oo dances in zy ship's spouse, must beware zee unexpected shag". Eric might say. Or "He's French; he's dash, and he's seeing I think that was the word" Leslie Ash, *Cantona* as Manchester United fans once chanted, clearly inspired by his Gallic muse.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (90840)
7.00 Breakfast News (1) (4389)
9.00 Kithroy (T) (282227)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (7380389)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (3384853)
11.00 Change That (3374220)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (3351389)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (723827)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (14306)
12.30 Wipeout (4805785)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (53849785)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (46056)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (56881380).
1.40 Neighbours (T) (3581818)
2.05 Ironside Practical Jokers with a sick sense of humour keep the police in suspense (T) (5125633)
2.35 Through the Keyhole (T) (7110358)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6768260).
3.45 Spider (5339259) 3.50 Smart on the Road (904872) 4.05 Rugrats (6405414)
4.30 L & K Friday (3343292) 4.55 Newsround Extra (5806211) 5.10 Blue Peter (9701478)
5.35 Neighbours (T) (143211)
6.00 One O'Clock News; Weather (T) (259)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (211)
7.00 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook Kate Winslet and Gray O'Brien grace the hectic cookery show (T) (5018)
7.30 Top of the Pops Performances by Blur, The Corrs, Cher, Cardigans, Whitney Houston, Britney Spears and Stereophonics (T) (465)
8.00 Ground Force Alan Titchmarsh and the team pitch in to create the ultimate football fan's garden, complete with corner grandstand (4/8) (T) (4766)
8.30 The Builders The council gives the go-ahead to Tony Keating's latest project (T) (6501)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (2389)
9.30 Parkinson With the comedian Lenny Henry and Rolf Harris (T) (336379)



Wartime action with Lenny Henry and Rolf Harris (1.30pm)

10.25 Where Eagles Dare (1969) Commandos set out to rescue an American general captured by the Nazis. Second World War espionage thriller, with Richard Burton and Clint Eastwood. Directed by Brian G. Hutton (50331018)
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12.55 Am Chile for Satan (TVM 1991) Chiller, starring Marisa Berenson as a pregnant woman who moves to New Mexico with her husband, only to be unsettled by a warning that evil forces are stirring. Directed by Robert Lieberman, John Schwartzman (T) (4254438)

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RUGBY LEAGUE 47

Challengers line up to claim crown from the Monie men

SPORT

FRIDAY MARCH 5 1999

CRICKET 50

Lara faces biggest character test of his career



Kinnear told to rest after heart scare



Kinnear's long-term future is in doubt after heart attack

JOE KINNEAR, the Wimbledon manager, suffered a heart attack before his club's match against Sheffield Wednesday on Wednesday evening. He will not be in charge for the game against Leicester City, also in the FA Carling Premiership, at Selhurst Park tomorrow, and is unlikely to be released from the Northern General Hospital in Sheffield until after the weekend.

Kinnear, 52, has been told to rest for at least two weeks and will have to take medication for the foreseeable future. He could miss the rest of the season as he recuperates and his long-term future may also be in doubt. It will not be discussed by Wimbledon officials until he has returned to London and settled at home. After complaining of chest pains before the game at Hillsborough, which Wimbledon went on to

win 2-1, Kinnear was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Sam Hammam, Wimbledon's partner-governor, spent the evening with Kinnear and they were later joined by Kinnear's wife, Bonnie. She remained at the hospital yesterday as her husband underwent more tests. Kinnear, one of the longest-serving managers in the Premiership, was said to be "comfortable".

"I'd like to be there when it's sitting up, taking a lightly boiled egg and chatting up all the nurses," a close friend said. "Not much will change. I'm sure he'll be back at the helm before long."

A hospital spokesman was less sure. "I think that's way down the line," he said. "I'm sure that's not even on his own or Mr Hammam's mind at the moment, even though they would have to consider it. I'm

sure it's not uppermost in their minds. The main thing is for Mr Kinnear to get himself back to health."

Kenny Cunningham, the Wimbledon captain, had noticed that Kinnear was troubled during the pre-match warm-up. "As we were coming off the pitch, it became obvious that Joe was in some type of discomfort," he said. "We thought it might have been indigestion or something like that. An ambulance then came and took him to hospital. It was a bit of a shock at the time, but, hopefully, the worst is now behind him. It was in our minds during the match and especially afterwards, but I don't think it had any bearing on the game."

Football management has long

been regarded as a stressful job, particularly in the Premiership, in which the demand for success – and the financial rewards that go with it – have reached unrealistic levels. Kinnear is an often volatile character, who believes in expressing his emotions in the most demonstrable manner possible. His state of mind cannot have been helped by Wimbledon's double defeat against Tottenham Hotspur in the FA Cup fourth round and Worthington Cup semi-finals, last month, which produced four matches of intense pressure on and off the pitch.

He responded typically by saying that Wimbledon could still qualify for Europe via a high finish in the Premiership and they lie sixth after the victory at Hillsborough.

Barry Fry, the Peterborough United manager, has survived two heart attacks yet remains his same, volatile self in the Nationwide League third division. Ronnie Moore of Rotherham United, and Steve Parkin of Mansfield Town, were wired up with heart monitors during their third-division game at Field Mill in January.

Both managers' heart rates soared during the match, which Rotherham won 3-0. "We're all under the same pressures," Moore said yesterday. "I was very surprised my readings weren't higher as I'm a real shouter and screamer. People tell me there's so much pressure in the Premiership and they lie sixth after the victory at Hillsborough.

"I'd like to see Premier League managers linked up to the heart

monitors. Can you imagine what Gordon Strachan would be like?" In Kinnear's absence, Mick Harford and David Kemp, his first-team coaches, will look after the side.

"Joe is in the best possible hands," Efan Ekoku, the Wimbledon striker, said. "We're still pushing for a European place and, hopefully, Joe will be back to spearhead the campaign."

Bradford City have boosted their attempt to gain promotion to the FA Carling Premiership by completing the signing of Dean Windass, the 29-year-old forward, from Oxford United.

He is expected to make his debut for his new club away to Port Vale tomorrow. Bradford will pay Oxford £500,000 plus a further £50,000 if they win promotion this season.

Hill backing Schumacher for world title

FROM KEVIN EASON IN MELBOURNE

THE recommendation can come no higher than from the man with the biggest axe to grind, but Damon Hill was willing yesterday to press the claims of Michael Schumacher, his old adversary, as the Formula One motor racing world champion this year.

Hill would seem the least likely to declare his support for the driver who presented the biggest obstacle to his own championship ambitions, particularly on the eve of the first grand prix of the season. It was in Australia that the German prevented Hill from winning his first world title by allowing his Benetton to come into contact with the Englishman's Williams in 1994.

The incident was judged to have been an accident, but Hill is now wise enough to believe that Schumacher's innate cunning probably robbed him of victory and their rivalry has continually

spilled into bitterness and recriminations. Since then, Schumacher has twice lost the world title in the last race of the season in his Ferrari, leading Hill to predict that his time has come again.

"If you take the way things went in the last two seasons, I would put my money on Ferrari winning it. I would put my money on Michael winning."

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he said. "They have come so close in the last two years, but I think this year Ferrari will start closer to McLaren. They did last season, which will give Michael a good chance to challenge straightaway. I wouldn't put a lot of money on it, but I can see it happening."

"It would be good for the sport if Ferrari won it and it

would certainly be good for Ferrari, but if Michael starts this year as he finished last season, then the advantage will be with Ferrari and Michael Schumacher.

"It's a gut feeling. McLaren started here with a 2sec advantage. In effect, last year and Ferrari ended up being on level terms towards the end of the season. That gives Michael a magnificent chance."

Schumacher was sidelined by his only mechanical failure of the season in Melbourne last year, while the McLarens of Mika Hakkinen – on his way to the championship – and David Coulthard humiliated the opposition by lapping the entire field.

Perhaps Hill's assessment would have been tempered if he had witnessed the German's lukewarm performance in his first significant press conference of the season. This was Schumacher at his worst uninterested, terse, even leaving the stage for a toilet break at one point while Ron Dennis, the McLaren team principal, answered questions.

Not that Hakkinen, his chief rival, was in much better form. The world champion said that he is relaxed and determined to retain his title, yet he, too, seemed to be out of sorts, even anxious. In fact, the only world champion who appeared geared up for the challenge was Hill, the oldest man on the grid and the driver most readily tipped for retirement at the end of the season.

Eddie Jordan, the team owner, has already warned that a poor season would see Hill, 37, hanging up his helmet and overalls and walking into the bliss of family life at home in Ireland.

However, Hill spoke enthusiastically yesterday of developing a car that might win races this season and might be ready to challenge for the world championship next season.

This is the first time since he left Williams in his championship-winning year of 1996 that a car has been built for him and Hill has joined in the task with enthusiasm, visiting the Jordan factory on days off and building a relationship with the team.

Earlier this week, he loaded the Jordan mechanics into



Hill is delighted with Jordan's progress before the opening grand prix of the season this weekend, but believes that Schumacher has a better title chance

taxis to take them out for a meal and then to a club to listen to a rhythm and blues band as thanks for their relentless hard work in getting his new Jordan ready for the race on Sunday.

"This is the first time a car has been built around me, with me putting in my ideas and talking closely with the engineers and designers," Hill said. "There is a lot on this car that I like and it is a much

much better car than the one we started last season with."

Having left the excellence of Williams, Hill went to Arrows and a car incapable of even getting to the starting grid in the first race of the 1997 season here. This time last year, having joined Jordan, he laboured to eighth place, which was a warning of times so difficult that he contemplated retirement midway through last year.

All that changed spectacularly when Hill won in Belgium, signalling the rebirth of Jordan as a serious championship contender and Hill as a driver capable of breaking the McLaren-Ferrari monopoly of grands prix victories.

"I am not trying to play things down because we don't know yet where we are against the competition," he said, "but the omens are good. Maybe we are not yet in the position of winning the championship, but we can win races and we have a car that can be developed. Perhaps we will have a realistic chance of a car that can win a championship in the year 2000."



Schumacher's performance yesterday left much to be desired

Richmond face cash crisis

BY MARK SOUSTER

losses in professional rugby is another matter.

Michelle Lawrence, the Richmond press officer, said: "There is talk of John coming in. It is not difficult to understand why. He took over and saved Reading three years ago when he ended

it and has put an enormous amount into the community."

Lawrence indicated that the club would probably go into administration today or on Monday, which would give it a four-month breathing space in which to seek new finance and restructure now that Levett has made his position clear.

Tony Hallett, the former Richmond chief executive and now a non-executive director, said that the administration option would ensure that "creditors do not become predators". Levett is reducing his stake from 80 per cent to 25 per cent in the

club, which moved its base from southwest London last season to cut annual losses from £2.8 million to £1.6 million.

The revelation of the club's dire straits could not come at a more inopportune moment. They have just reached the semi-finals of the Tetley's Bitter Cup and the financial problems will create uncertainty within the playing squad of 32, who have been reassured that there is sufficient money to keep the club going until the end of the season.

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